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ABSTRACT

This report analyzes data resulting from a survey of school participants in six St. Louis area districts. It attempts to discover what motivates people to participate in the public schools, and what effect such participation has on them. Findings include: (1) the more people participate, the greater the impact of that participation will be on them; (2) the greater the impact, the more likely it is to be in the realm of personal self-development; (3) people who participate in one kind of activity do not necessarily participate in another; (4) the type of participation can be substantially independent of the amount (e.g., a supportive activist may spend as much time as a purposive activist, but he spends it doing different things for different reasons); and (5) citizen participation in its usual forms has relatively little direct effect on educational policy. (Author)

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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by

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Introduction and Acknowledgments

This study was initially conceived in the spring of 1973, but in many respects its origins are much farther back. Moreover, it fits into a larger set of intellectual interests that have engaged my attention for a long while. In the early 1960's I undertook a study of the characteristics and motives of those who were active in ward and township political organizations, and I found that the usual characterization of such "activists" as devoted partisans going all out to win elections simply did not describe many of those who attended the party organization meetings. Over quite a number of years I taught, directed graduate student research, and wrote myself on the problem of who joins voluntary associations and why. Here again I came to the view that simplistic interpretations that assumed purposive intent on the part of joiners, especially in that intent was supposed to encompass the expressed goals of the organization, were seriously mistaken. Thus, several years of work had persuaded me that political participation was much more complex than traditional research had recognized.

Attention to the practices and politics of local schools had also been a recurrent research focus for several years. The Political Science Department at Washington University was the base of important pioneering work in politics and education. In the late 1950's the then-chairman of the Department, Thomas H. Eliot, developed his strong interest in public school politics and invited me to participate in some of that work at the state level. Meanwhile, my own research on local politics came to incorporate the schools as an integral part of the local political system. Periodically, since that time, our students have pursued research topics that involved public school politics, so that this dimension of interest has remained active.

In thinking about intellectual origins, one must note a more recent component, the broad concern with citizen participation. For me, this interest began with the emergence of the citizen advisory component of the War on Poverty. Like many students of urban politics I was unprepared, when the Economic Opportunity Program burst on the scene, for the upsurge in excitement over citizen participation. In the period 1965-1967, however, I worked with mayors, community action program directors and with local citizens advisory councils as all these people, in different ways and for different reasons, began to expand the boundaries of citizen action. In the universities, also, the concept of participation took on new meaning during the latter 1960's, and any member of a university community with a particle of concern for the conditions of that community's life took new interest in the possibilities and limits of active involvement.

Research on citizen participation in the public schools was thus a kind of natural convergence of several streams of long-standing interest. Moreover, it was related to the concerns of social scientists, of students of education, of mayors and other public officials, and of ordinary citizens, all at the same time. This research project attempts to speak to all of these concerns. It was made possible by a generous grant from the National Institute of Education (Grant #NE-G-00-3-0166) in the first active year of the Institute's operation. I am most grateful for the support of NIE and especially for the helpful understanding of Dr. René Gonzalez, the project monitor. Washington University also contributed beyond the usual kinds of support with time off to work and computer support.

Although I was the sole investigator of record, many people have helped with the work. Dr. Karen Dawson and Dr. Laurily Epstein assisted in designing the project and conducting interviews. Dr. Dawson provided invaluable

critical analysis of question design and coding as well as superb materials on some of the communities. Dr. Carol Kohfeld, Rose Salisbury, Leeann Judd, and Nellie Anderson helped with interviewing, and Robert Salisbury assisted in the coding. Allison Belkin and Frank Kopel helped with data processing. Susan Salisbury, Lillian Ehrlich, Jill Geib, and, especially, Valerie Karras, transcribed my longhand into legible typescript. To all of them I am most grateful, though I must acknowledge a very special obligation to Rose Salisbury. Not only did she do a substantial share of the interviewing, and do it very well; she provided both insight and encouragement throughout the years of work and put up with me besides.

Rodney Wright has been simply indispensable. From the beginning stages of design to the last critique of the manuscript his contribution has been immense. He conducted many of the interviews, gathered data on the communities, coded, punched and processed the survey material and helped mightily in the development of the interpretations and ideas contained in the study. And through it all he has been a cheerful and supportive friend. I thank him here, but my debt runs much deeper.

Robert H. Salisbury

St. Louis
May, 1977

CHAPTER 1

Citizen Participation in the Schools: Concepts and Research Strategies

A knowledgeable observer of social science research during the 1960's and 1970's would surely have noted a marked increase in the number of scholarly books, monographs and journal articles with titles indicating that their contents had to do with citizen participation.[1] Perhaps it is rash to attempt to identify the reasons for this surge of interest, but the exploration of participation in the schools cannot be fully understood without being placed in its larger intellectual and political context. The framing of the research problem, the strategy adopted to guide investigation, and the interpretation of the findings are all greatly affected both by the kinds of things other scholars have been doing and by what has been happening in the political and social world beyond the academy. This may well be true of any study. It is certainly true of this one.

First, of course, we must acknowledge that the interest in citizen participation is hardly new. It is a central theme of Aristotle's political philosophy, it permeates the late medieval disputations over the nature and obligations of citizenship, and it is at the core of any theorizing about democracy.[2] Discussions and arguments on the topic have a rich lineage. What is new is systematic empirical research setting forth how much of what kinds of citizen activity actually exist, what factors affect it and what consequences follow from it.[3] Research of this kind has grown out of, and helped to stimulate, the maturing of survey research technology which during the past quarter century has permitted mass activity to be measured and analyzed with a validity never before possible. The data processing capability that is so vital a part of survey work has also led to the building of archives for aggregate data of many kinds, so that we can now conduct far more comprehensive and sophisticated time series analyses, of participation and many other matters, than ever before.

The first flowering of survey research that related to participation was deeply disconcerting to those who, on the basis of impressionistic evidence and general optimism about people, had acted as apostles of the democratic faith. For the early results showed, first, that not nearly so many Americans belonged to voluntary associations as had been supposed, from Tocqueville on, in this "nation of joiners," and that there was a strong middle class bias among those who did belong. Insofar as active citizenship was expressed through group participation, therefore, only a part of "the people" could be said even to have the chance to fulfill their obligations.

Voting behavior research was even more disturbing and its implications were so clear that theorists proceeded to revise rather substantially their formulations of the democratic creed in order to take account of the new evidence. Essentially, the research findings suggested that non-voters and marginal voters were least informed and least competent to make reasonable judgments about candidates for office. If they failed to come to the polls, therefore, it might be just as well for the effectiveness and health of the polity. Moreover, the actual conceptualizations of political issues and candidates even among those who did vote were so primitive, lacking in consistency or even coherence, that a political system which gave "the people" only a choice about which elites would govern them seemed a necessity.[4]

Elitist revisionism of democratic theory was not the only response to the data explosion, though it was perhaps the first and, for a time, the most influential. With the 1960 publication of Schattschneider's Semi-Sovereign People[5] the tide began to turn, and through the ensuing decade there developed a broad-ranging critique of elitist theories of democracy and, as a praxilogical companion, the articulation of theories of participatory democracy. Participatory democrats did not deny the truth of the survey evidence of citizen incompetence. They did deny that incompetence was inevitable, and they insisted that alternative institutional arrangements, involving the redistribution of power from present-day elites to the mass of ordinary people, would enable competence to develop and flourish.

In the nature of the case the argument for participatory democracy could not be supported very effectively from systematic empirical work. In the real world the institutional preconditions had not been established so the predicted result could not be observed. Advocates of this view had to move into the political arena in pursuit of their evidence. They needed to change the world in order to show the truth of their arguments. The tensions that resulted within the social sciences themselves were the dominant facts of professional academic life in the late 60's and early 70's, and very few social scientists emerged unaffected by this ferment centering, as so much of it did, around questions involving participation.

The political world itself provided another very powerful stimulus to scholarly concern with these questions. Expanded citizen participation has been on the agenda of many, perhaps most, polities in recent years; partly for reasons of legitimation, partly in an effort to secure more efficient provision of government services, but most importantly as an aspect of the effort to redistribute power. In the United States perhaps the most dramatic symbolic link between participation and redistribution was contained in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 with its memorable call for "maximum feasible participation of the areas and groups affected." Many other acts of public policy since have involved the devolution of authority to citizen groups, neighborhoods, and other groupings of "the people," and the end of this cycle has not yet been reached.[6] The point of interest here is that this stream of political activity has strongly encouraged further academic efforts, in both research and argumentation, focusing on participation.

The public schools have been very much in the midst of this ferment.[7] A substantial fraction of the last decade's proposals for institutional reform have involved restructuring the schools, especially those in the central cities, and many have contained participatory features. An essential thrust of the decentralization efforts in New York City, for example, was to give groups of citizens at the neighborhood level a stronger voice which, if it was to be heard, would require them to become active. At another level, protest demonstrations for and against desegregation have reflected forms of heightened citizen involvement. And, partially under the sponsoring aegis of federal agencies, there has been a multi-faceted effort to organize citizen groups to express purposive concerns about public education and to direct the accompanying zeal into constructive reform channels. What the net effects of these efforts have been is far from clear, but there can be no doubt of the timeliness of systematic inquiry into the phenomena of citizen participation in the public schools.

II

The study of citizen participation in the schools may be approached from several different angles. One way is to think about citizen involvement as a mechanism for effecting change in the schools. The assumptions, which in one way or another have guided much discussion of participation in recent years, are that 1) school performance is quite unsatisfactory, and 2) increased citizen involvement in school affairs would improve that performance. It is assumed further that improved performance would involve increased responsiveness to citizen demands. This implies that citizens have demands to make regarding how the schools should be run, and that if those demands were more clearly heard and better heeded, educational performance would improve. If the quality of the schools is to be measured more or less directly by responsiveness to citizen values, these latter assumptions cannot be gainsaid. But if something like literacy rates or SAT scores or even basketball victories are taken as the measure of school effectiveness, than the relationship to citizen involvement most certainly becomes questionable.

This approach to citizen involvement in the schools implies that the participation has purposive intent. Moreover, many observers have given such an emphasis to participation that, compared to the past at any rate, it would appear to be considerably more extensive in both volume and impact on the system. In the first instance, therefore, citizen participation comprises phenomena that are unusual, beyond ordinary experience. Purposive participation often results from some crisis or conflict in the schools or the community. Issues involving race have lately been prominent in this fashion. The precipitating factor may sometimes be a particular person or group who develops enough of a concern about commitment to change school policy to undertake the tasks of mobilizing others.

In some instances efforts may be made to institutionalize greater amounts of citizen participation. Citizen advisory councils have been mandated, for example, and even given some kind of sign-off or veto responsibilities with regard to particular policies. Not only in education but in the federal programs dealing with poverty, revenue sharing, and community development block grants, for example, citizen groups of one sort or another are granted some degree of authority to be exercised as they participate. In some instances the line becomes rather shadowy between those citizens who participate in essentially advisory, non-office-holding positions and those who occupy roles defined more explicitly as authoritative. But passing over those difficulties, we can still agree that we are dealing here with a particular type of citizen participation, a type intended to affect policy and advocated or resisted on the basis of its expected policy impact.

For the most part, such policy-purposive participation has been the main focus of case studies of citizen involvement. Often it offers dramatic situations illustrating large themes of social conflict and exciting scenarios of action. Exhortations to achieve greater levels of purposive citizen participation typically involve a rhetoric laced with urgency and passion. Moreover, frequently one finds that contained within those exhortations are links to more comprehensive ideologies, or at least loose perspectives, which in turn are pointed toward broad-scale social change and redistribution of power. Again, the assumption involved is that "the people" are different from the presently dominant elites, and, if they, "the people," take a more active part, the whole structure of society will be transformed in the process.

Citizen participation of the policy-purposive variety thus evokes very large themes. But this is only one sense in which contemporary debates have meaning. A significant tradition of argument supporting expanded citizen participation emphasizes the enhanced impact of each participating individual on the policy-making system. The focus here is on the unique citizen of whom it is said that, if he or she participates more actively, the specific advantages sought, for one's children or one's broad philosophy, either one, will be more fully realized. No necessary social reconstruction is implied here; the focus is on the individual. But the implied causal connection is clear. The more participative, the more powerful, and this is thought to be true at both the individual and the aggregate level.

Impact on policy outcomes is certainly a central purpose of citizen participation, but, equally certainly, it is not the only way to think about the phenomena of participation. In the major lines of political-philosophical tradition of the Western World, citizen participation has often been regarded as intrinsically valuable, rather than justified on instrumental grounds. Much recent polemic advocating expanded citizen participation has especially stressed the individual growth in personal capacity and, indeed, humanity that would accrue from increased involvement in the affairs of the political community. In turn, one can discern at least two elements in the long tradition of political philosophizing on this point. One is that individuals will expand their capabilities and understandings so as more fully to achieve their potentialities as human beings. The fully human person will also be fully active, and, conversely, involvement in civic affairs is a necessary condition for the realization of the human possibilities. This is the position of Aristotle and it is carried down to the pamphlets of the League of Women Voters today.

There is another tradition, less strongly embedded in mainstream America perhaps, that also concentrates on the linkage between citizen participation and the resulting condition of each individual participant.

This stream of argument is derived especially from Jean-Jacques Rousseau and, to a lesser degree, John Stuart Mill.[8] Rousseau contended that the fully participating individual would be transformed by the participative experience. His opinion would be altered such that, out of the participative experience, consensus, the general will, would emerge. Notice that this is quite a different view from that of Aristotle. Rousseau did not anticipate that participation would result in any specific change of direction in individual opinion or even in the aggregate distribution of political views. Rather, the processes of interaction and discussion that are inevitable aspects of full participation would lead to mutual accommodation and policy consensus. Another, more contingent, way to put this is to suggest that the more active participants are, the greater this policy agreement will be. Rousseau, of course, postulated certain systemic parameters, rather restrictive ones, indeed. The general will was anticipated only in those homogeneous, moderate-sized, communities analogous to the Swiss cantons of the late eighteenth century. Still, there are many contemporary American communities, especially among suburban school districts like those in this study, whose proportions and characteristics resemble Rousseau's "model cities" of two centuries ago. The hypothesis may still, therefore, be entertained.

John Stuart Mill represents still another strand in the "grand tradition" of Western democratic theory about citizen participation. Mill was not convinced of the extant capacity of the ordinary people of mid-Victorian England to take their place as fully participative citizens. Yet, though he refused the romanticism of Rousseau, he remained committed to the desirability, nay the necessity, of full citizenship for all. Mill's solution was found in a combination of gradualism and a kind of quasifederalism. People should become active in their local communities, he contended, and they would thereby learn the necessary skills and acquire or cultivate the personal competencies to enable them to "move up" to higher levels of governing responsibility. Local government, for Mill, was in large measure a training ground for larger purposes. And, if Mill was right, one might expect the school arena to serve a similar function. If so, then active participation in school affairs should lead to growth in personal competence and inclination to serve further, so that subsequently other, and "higher," forms of participation would be undertaken.

In the heritage of values that comprise the politico-cultural formula of mainstream America--the themes that permeate Fourth of July orations, for instance--the obligation to participate is surely a prominent component. Almond and Verba found empirically that Americans were especially likely to express an active sense of citizen duty,[9] and the theme recurs throughout the nation's mythic structure and cultural history as well. We cannot here separate out all the elements involved in this participatory cultural posture. But even a partial list might identify a Lockean emphasis on the unfettered individual making one's own social choices, a Puritan stress on the affirmative responsibility for one's moral health and spiritual salvation, an experiential tradition that included the active involvement of ordinary people in both revolution and nation-building, more than two centuries of encounter with the frontier and the accompanying "ideology" that announced everyman to be self-reliant and personally responsible for a full share of the community's well-being. And out of all this, however much erosion there may have been in more recent times of urban sprawl, racial tension, transnational corporations, vast bureaucratization and depersonalization, and whatever other fearful forces one may wish to include, the sense of duty to participate remains strong, a central element in the very definition of good citizenship.[10]

This obligation to participate may be expected to be especially strong with respect to schools. More than other institutions in American public life, the schools combine a number of elements that undergird the American cultural commitment to active participation. For one thing, a large share of their governing policies are made, even today, in an era of greatly increased intervention from state and federal governments, by locally chosen "amateur" citizens. School boards comprise perhaps the largest single set of officials in the nation whose rewards for their service are almost entirely intrinsic. Through direct referenda citizens make a larger proportion of the budgetary decisions governing schools than for any other segment of public policy. And there are countless examples, growing in number at a rapid rate, of more or less official committees of citizens constituted in their communities to provide advice regarding one aspect or another of school policy. Thus in many ways not only are the forms of popular participation fully in evidence in the institutional arenas of public education, but there is ample ground for supposing that the activity of lay citizens really does affect what goes on in the schools; not fully, of course, but in important ways.

There is another element present in the school arena that evokes powerful feelings of obligation to take an active and responsible part—children. It is not necessary to become entangled in arguments about whether Americans are more or less concerned than other peoples about the educational progress and general well-being of their children. All that needs to be said is that many parents in the United States do in fact feel a strong sense of duty to participate in activities affecting the public schools out of a generalized sense of obligation to their children. Apart from the purposive desire for changes in educational policy that may evoke parental involvement, parents often believe that by becoming active they show to their children a visible sign of their love and concern. And, since a showing of love is felt to be a parental duty, so participation also becomes a duty.

The foregoing comments suggest that citizen participation in the schools has some rather special aspects, and it may well be asked whether school activity is not so distinctive in its patterns and purposes as to render it a truly separate species, not to be related meaningfully to more general questions about participation. The distinctive elements include, first, the parent-child relationship as the prime necessary condition for citizen activity beyond the level of referendum and school board policy. It is possible for non-parents to get involved in school affairs, but among the general public it must surely be rare. A second distinctive element is that school participation is frequently, perhaps mostly, supportive activity rather than purposive. From their very beginning, Parent-Teacher Associations and their equivalents have been organized primarily in order to provide public support for the schools.[11] Diffuse support, for schools in general, has been expected to result from two processes. First, increased information about the schools is conveyed to the members, and, as they know more about the program and are better acquainted with the professional personnel, they are expected to be more favorable. Second, as parents become involved in school-related activities, they will come increasingly to develop a positive psychological identification with the schools and hence provide support for them. Specific supports are also provided through parental participation, of course. Fairs and bake sales may raise money for the school library or new playground equipment. Mothers may serve as teacher aids or drive for field trips. And for all of these kinds of reasons school administrators have encouraged and often actually assembled the organizational mechanisms for participation.

But is this kind of activity "really" participation in the sense that theorists and advocates have generally employed the concept? From one perspective the answer is yes. One function of mass participation in a democratic polity is legitimation. That is, if the people participate in some fashion, then the decisions made, never mind by whom, will be accepted by them as legitimate expressions of their democratically expressed desires. Legitimacy is a necessity for any regime. Vigorous demands for action from the mass public may generate such tension or so overload the system as to make effective government impossible. Thus, the argument runs, supportive participation is especially valuable, since it legitimates without adding to the demand problems that government must resolve.

From another angle, however, activity that is primarily supportive ought not be counted. Verba and Nie are among the many who *define* participation as consisting of those activities intended to influence government. There is no problem, since Thomas H. Eliot's famous essay,[12] about public schools being considered within the bounds of government. Clearly they are, and, equally clearly, activities intended to influence them constitute participation in the classic sense. The uncertainty involves the matter of "intent to influence." If supportive activities, not designed to influence policy, are not truly to be considered as participation, then it would follow that the expected effects of participation, for the system or the individual, would also be missing. Now the main system level effect expected to follow from participation is the democratic control over policy.

The values of the citizenry are supposed to shape the decisions of those in authority. But when it is the principal who organizes the PTA to engender public support, the main flow of influence will be in the other direction. Citizens will be persuaded to accept as their own the values of those in authority.

One may grant all this to be true, however, and yet regard school participation as very little different from any other, more obviously "real," political participation. A quarter-century of voting research, for example, has amply documented the fact that voters are influenced by their leaders as well as influencing them in return. The studies of interest groups similarly stress the extent to which interest group leaders attempt to persuade their members to believe what the leaders think is best for them. If the leadership succeeds in this process of "farming the membership," it can then represent the group's opinion, to Congress or whomever, in the best tradition of democratic control. Nor is this mere oligarchy at work. It is the on-going interaction of leaders and followers that makes it seem foolish to depend on assumptions of a one-way flow of influence as an essential criterion of participatory citizenship.

There is another reason to insist that supportive activities should be included within the scope of the concept of political participation. The presence of "intent to influence" is simply not to be assumed in more "conventional" types of participation. We do not ask whether a campaign contributor gives money in order to influence policy or to help a friend. And although we do not know, we count the act as one of meaningful participation. We do not, and as Mancur Olson has shown[13] we cannot, count as authentic participants in labor unions only those who are motivated by purposive concerns. Participation is characterized by behavior, not intent.

It involves joining, attending, serving, voting, and so on. What motives have precipitated the activity constitutes an empirical question. Whether the patterns are different in one institutional arena, like schools, from another, like partisan elections, is likewise an empirical issue. But there is no conceptual justification for separating "merely" supportive school participation from other manifestations of democratic citizenship prior to a close examination of the data.[14]

What we have said suggests two further points of great importance, both often overlooked in previous work on participation. In that work it has often been argued that the phenomena comprising citizen activity are essentially all of a piece, that they are unidimensional. Both polities and individuals were seen to vary in the amount of participation, but virtually no consideration was given to the possible significance of variety in the kinds of activities engaged in. Milbrath's formulation serves to illustrate the conceptualization.[15] He arrayed people essentially according to the number of political acts engaged in, from voting as the most common and least difficult to candidacy for elective office as the most "costly" act engaged in by only a few. In between, positioned on the scale according to the frequency of occurrence, were such things as attending political meetings, giving money for campaigns, and belonging to political organizations. For the most part, the data from which this formulation was constructed provided a quite plausible base for the argument. Not all of the items "scaled" but the relationships reported were reasonably close to some form of Guttman scale criterion.

The research of Verba and Nie was therefore of great importance. Utilizing survey data collected in a non-election year and asking several more questions specifically to probe the kinds of participatory acts people had undertaken, they found the phenomenon to be multi-dimensional. That is, not only did people vary in the amount of their participation but also, and independent of amount, in the type. Specifically, they found two groups of participants who had relatively little in common with each other. One, the campaign specialists, were active in party politics but not in community affairs. The other, the communalists, displayed the opposite pattern, active in attempting to deal with community patterns but keeping a low profile in partisan campaigns.

The contrast between the "traditional" one-dimensional view of participation and the Verba-Nie formulation is partly to be explained by the questions asked in the research. Systematic work in the past had concentrated almost entirely on two kinds of data: voting and other election-related activities, and membership in voluntary associations. Historical studies of voting turnout and more recent survey data on election-centered behavior have dominated the discussions of both the correlates and the consequences of participation in modern society. Studies of interest group participation are much less numerous or substantial, but those that do exist have customarily been done without reference to the electoral involvement of the respondents--as election studies have not inquired much about the group-centered activities of the voters. Each kind of research has had a single institutional focus, and neither has sufficiently considered the involvement of people in other, politically relevant, institutional arenas.

The second great flaw in participation research then has been the failure to recognize that participation never exists in general, or apart from some particular institutional context.[16] People may take part in election campaigns, in voluntary associations, in community problem-solving, in school support groups, or even in worker-management councils. The patterns and the purposes of participation in a given context may or may not be like those in another setting. Do school activists resemble the communalists of Verba and Nie? They might and yet be quite unlike those whose community participation is expressed mainly through street demonstrations and protests and who were excluded from the Verba-Nie data by the decision not to include extra-legal participation. What we know for certain is that all the world of citizen participation is not contained in election campaigns, and it cannot be fully revealed by research that fails to look at activity as it occurs in particular institutional settings. Participation is institution-specific, and when the investigator's questions gloss over that fact, and it is a fact, they run a grave risk of misunderstanding what people do--and why and with what consequences--when they become active citizens.

The argument that participation is institution-specific and should be so studied may be extended to what is, in a sense, a special case of the argument. One of the severe limitations of much national survey research is that it cannot adequately sample any particular community. Consequently, any effects that might be produced by the specific circumstances of that community or by distinctive combinations of groups and forces within that community cannot be detected. Now when one is attempting to account for the incidence and direction of partisan identification and voting in presidential elections, it may be quite reasonable to suppose that differential community effects will be negligible in the overall pattern of relationships and may safely be disregarded. But when the dependent variable consists of other modes of participation, including involvement in the community itself, it is no longer reasonable to suppose that the unique circumstances of local context do not affect the patterns of activity.

Indeed, there is a long line of community studies which argues, explicitly or implicitly, that what happens there, while sometimes compatible with certain general statements, is highly dependent on the particular context.[17]

The view that many aspects of political participation are deeply embedded in a context of a specific institutional arena thus leads to the conclusion that research must consider both the "substantive" institutions, such as schools or political parties, and the community in which they operate as well.[18] Verba and Nie acknowledge the latter point in part when they attempt to assess the extent of boundedness or definition among the communities tapped by their sample. But even if they had a secure sense of the meaning and distribution of boundedness among American communities that hardly exhausts the characteristics of communities of possible relevance to the incidence and character of citizen participation.

In its more general form the research question to be asked is to what extent a given array of dependent participatory behaviors can be explained on the basis of the characteristics of individuals, such as educational level or sex, or, alternatively whether the effects of those characteristics is in some sense dependent on the community setting in which they operate. It has long been noted, for instance, that working class voters living in predominantly middle class areas were much less likely to support "parties of the left" than when they resided among high concentrations of their own kind of people. Moreover, when there is a high degree of autonomous local control over an institutional arena, as there is in the case of schools, the events and experiences unique to that system may be expected to have a particularly pronounced effect. It remains an empirical question, to be sure, and must be settled from the evidence. The point really is that if we are adequately to understand the roots and meaning of citizen participation we must study it in the setting of specific institutional arenas in specific communities.

III

The line of argument we have presented was fundamental in leading us to the particular research design adopted for this study. To summarize the reasoning let us set forth three major operating premises: one, if we wish to study the modes of participation and its effects upon those who participate, we must do so in a particular context; two, school participation, either purposive or supportive, constitutes meaningful participation and may therefore be used to test Millian or Aristotelian hypotheses; three, we must throughout be alert to test whether individual characteristics work to affect participation in the same way in each community. Now let us turn to the specific design and research procedures employed.

First of all, we selected six school districts in the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan Area for study. The number and geographical concentration were dictated mainly by cost considerations, but, in addition, by staying within one area we were protected from some of the possible variety in community specifics that has plagued national survey analysis. Further, we could readily monitor the communities both before and after our field work and conduct follow-up studies to improve our grasp of the community context.

District selection was guided by two additional considerations. On the one hand, we wished to avoid excessive variation in size or complexity. The City of St. Louis system was too large and, like other core cities, qualitatively different along too many dimensions to enable ready analysis to be made if it were included. Parental involvement is much less common there, questions of racial balance are much more salient and on so much bigger a scale that including the City would overwhelm the other communities.[19]

For somewhat similar reasons we also omitted some large, sprawling suburban districts. Our selections were generally of comparable size; the one exception being also perhaps the most homogenaous socially.

The other general criterion employed was variety. We have included districts that varied in socio-economic composition from homogeneously rich to solid working class with several kinds of mixes in between. We have one school district which comprises an industrial town and one that includes a county seat and considerable surrounding farmland. We have districts that are nearly coterminous with their communities and one that includes twenty-three separate municipalities without much sense of community at all. One community is growing rapidly as suburban expansion reaches out to envelop it. Another is experiencing the sharp dips in school enrollment so common to older suburbs. There is religious and ethnic variety too, with some districts rather heavily Catholic or Jewish and some including substantial numbers of blacks. Finally, two districts are on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River, subject to different legal arrangements and a different political climate from the four districts in Missouri. In short, we have incorporated substantial and, we hope, relevant variation while holding more or less constant the factors of district size, suburban status and metropolitan area.

Within each community our strategy was as follows. We attended meetings of the parent-teacher organizations in each of the attendance areas in the districts. At each meeting we distributed a brief questionnaire and indicated that we would be calling on many of the people there for a more extended interview. In some districts we achieved somewhat better coverage than in others; twice we were refused access. The feeling among the research group was that, despite missing a few attendance areas, and, inevitably, reaching many more people at some meetings than at others, we had quite adequately tapped the bedrock of school participators in each district. In addition, we secured lists of PTA officers, school board candidates and members of citizens' committees appointed to deal with school issues of one kind or another. From the resultant pool of names we excluded those who indicated they were not really active in school affairs but only at the meeting for some idiosyncratic reason having nothing to do with citizen participation. We eliminated teachers and school officials in the district (though not those from elsewhere who were present in their capacity as citizen-parents). From the remainder we selected up to eighty "ordinary" citizen activists to be interviewed and up to ten more from the pool of school board candidates and citizen committee members. The total yield of completed interviews was 507. Most of the interviews took place in the respondent's home; a few in places of business. Generally, they lasted about one-and-one-half hours; somewhat longer for the board candidates and committee members who were asked additional questions.

It should be clear that the people we interviewed were, for the most part, ordinary people. At least they were ordinary citizen participants in the affairs of public education. We did eliminate the least active, but the large majority of our respondents were only moderately involved. Very few were movers or shakers. These were not the people one reads about who have transformed the character of their local schools. These were not people who had dramatic grievances or, as far as we could discover, dramatic personal distress, that drove them into activism. Except in one community they were not even people whom community crisis had driven into participatory enthusiasm. We had selected our communities in the hope and expectation that, given the recent past, one or more would explode--bubble, at the least--in crisis and controversy. While we were interviewing, they did not. Consequently, the great bulk of participation coming under our scrutiny was more or less ordinary. It was routine, customary, even reflexive. Our data represent the base line against which departures from participatory norms can be measured. We are not here talking about the people who change things--at least, not necessarily. These are not the elites who effect the cautionary tales of reform or reaction. The respondents in this study are ordinary. They are, for the most part, people who happened to appear at routine meetings of routine organizations--the PTA's --in a placid time of the political-educational year of 1974-75. Doubtless, in one way, these people are less interesting than one or another of the elites of participation; e.g., those who hold public office, those who engage in dramatic protests, those who seize the occasion to mobilize large forces or achieve large results. For the most part, our respondents are the products of social convention. They did not exaggerate the social significance of what they had done. They were quite willing to be spear carriers, supernumeraries even, in the displays of democratic citizenship.

This being so, our data take on particular significance. If we are to test hypotheses about the relationships between civic participation and its impact on the individual's opinions or capacities for action, surely the hardest test would be a situation where the participation was never thought to be very important in the first place. If we can show that such routine activity as attendance at PTA meetings and helping at school picnics results in the expected changes in personal attitude or ability to take on larger responsibilities, we will have evidence of exceptional probative weight with regard to the contentions of classical political philosophy.

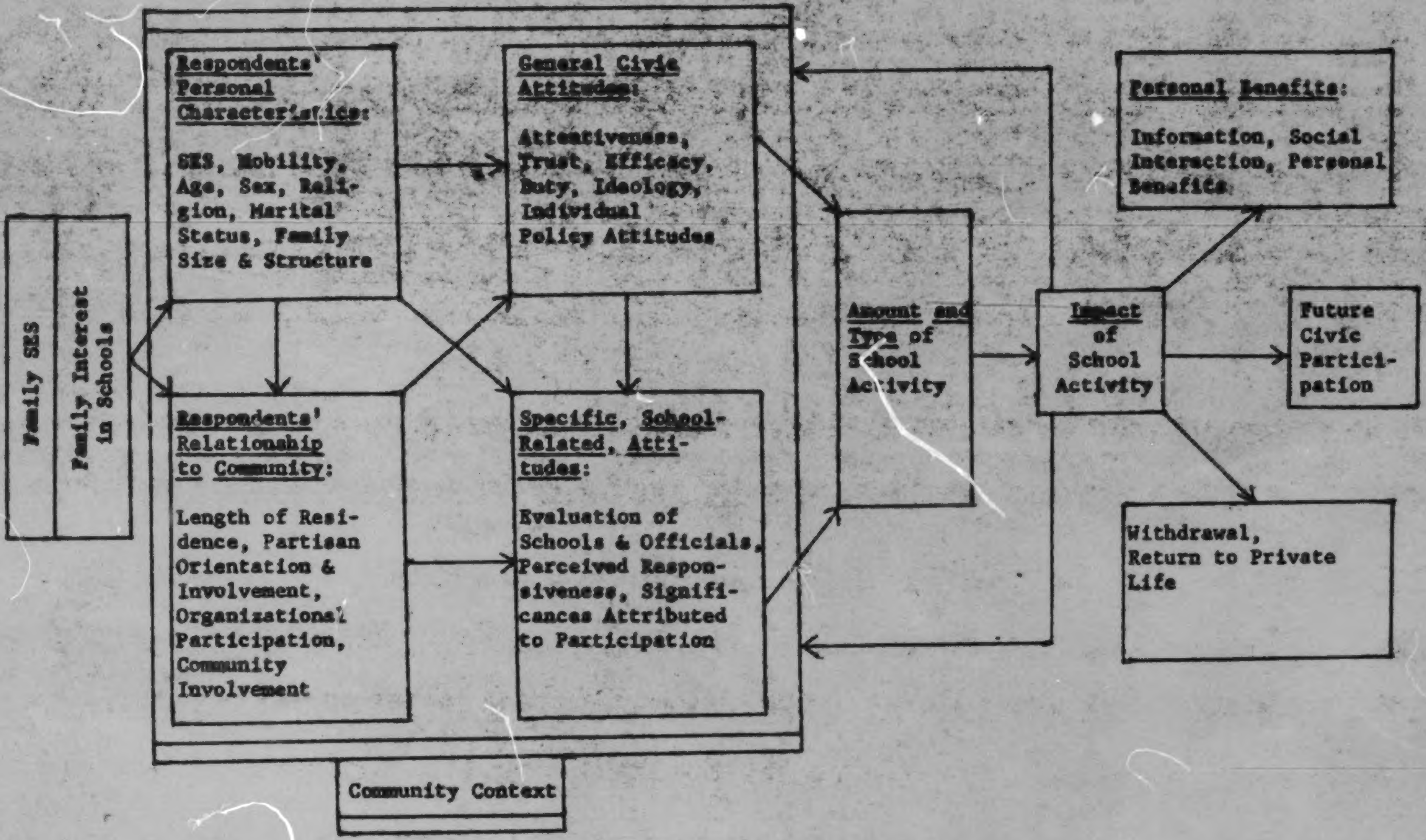
The analytic advantage presented us by the fact that all of respondents are active to some extent is considerable also. It means that we can develop much finer measures of activity and a much more sensitive appreciation of the relationship between activity and context or many other variables for that matter, since our numbers do not have to be divided into actives and inactives before proceeding further. And so we can probe more deeply. At the same time, this may be as good a place as any to indicate another decision on analytic strategy that may work in the opposite direction, away from complex analysis. We have determined to keep things rather simple, and not undertake many elaborate manipulations of the data. This decision was prompted in part by the findings themselves. Most of the central results are reasonably straightforward and do not require subtle measures to reveal their meanings. In addition, however, it must be remembered that the data are, ultimately, the responses to questions and not themselves the opinions or the behavior of ultimate concern. Opinion data may generally be valid indications of underlying reality, but there is always some uncertainty about how far this is so. Accordingly, we keep things simple so as not to run the risk of regarding our data as "real" and therefore tough enough to withstand all manner of walloping about.

We will conclude this discussion by setting forth the general conceptual schema that will guide and inform the presentation and discussion of our findings. Figure 1 presents a schematic depiction of the framework of interpretation within which we have not only developed the questions but interpreted and presented the responses. The schema, first of all, implies a flow of causal sequences through time. Even though we lack proper longitudinal data we still think of participation, its causes and consequences, in a framework of time. As we move from left to right on the chart, we are moving from factors that occur earlier in time to those that happen later. Thus we ask first about the respondent's family background, in terms both of social standing and of attitudes relevant to participation. Next, we seek to establish each participant's demographic, socio-economic, and otherwise personal profile. Third, we determine the individual's relationship to the community. Here we catch such elements as the length of residence, amount of community participation other than schools, and associated attitudinal considerations.

We move from these factors, which may be regarded as more or less background considerations, to attitudinal matters more completely expressed in the present tense. One set of these attitudes is rather general, dealing both with issues of the current political scene and with more abstract attitudes about political processes and institutions. The other set of attitudes deals specifically with the schools. In this preliminary schema we need not develop specific hypotheses about how the relationships are likely to run. We do expect, of course, that personal characteristics, connections to the community and broad socio-political attitudes will be related to more specific views about the schools and about the meaning of citizen participation in, and related to, the schools. The arrows in the schema are meant to convey that rather general idea without becoming any more specific as to intensity or causal flow.

All of the bundle of schema components discussed so far are understood to exist in and, very likely, to be affected by the particular circumstances of the community in which respondents live. What exactly those effects will be, how strong or in what direction, remains to be determined. We must be prepared to find that particular relationships within the "community context box" are unaffected by that box. But even then, conceptually the

FIGURE 1
Dynamics of School Participation: A Schematic Representation


Family SES
Family Interest in Schools
Respondents' Personal Characteristics:
SES, Mobility, Age, Sex, Religion, Marital Status, Family Size & Structure
Respondents' Relationship to Community:
Length of Residence, Partisan Orientation & Involvement, Organizational Participation, Community Involvement
General Civic Attitudes:
Attentiveness, Trust, Efficacy, Duty, Ideology, Individual Policy Attitudes
Specific, School-Related, Attitudes:
Evaluation of Schools & Officials, Perceived Responsiveness, Significances Attributed to Participation
Community Context
Amount and Type of School Activity
Impact of School Activity
Personal Benefits:
Information, Social Interaction, Personal Benefits
Future Civic Participation
Withdrawal, Return to Private Life

31-A

31-B

flow of relationships must be understood to have a geographic-systemic site, whatever its independent effects might be.

The central dependent variables of our schema and of our study are: one, the amount and type of school-related activity engaged in by the individual, and two, the impact of that activity on the individual. We will develop in detail the components of our analysis of school activity, what it includes and what patterns are contained therein. We expect to find that both the amount of school involvement and the type as well are related to the impact. We will try to demonstrate that impact is related both to attitudes (back to the left in the schematic depiction) and to behavior (forward, or down, to the right). The schema is not an entirely adequate representation of the conceptualization which has been employed, of course; nor does the Table of Contents altogether match the diagrammatic flow of causal connections. Nevertheless, in a rough and ready way it is thus that we conceive of the phenomena of citizen participation in the schools which we will attempt to describe and analyze in succeeding chapters.

In the next chapter we will describe in some detail the six communities included in our study. Then we will present a basic descriptive profile of our respondents. Following that we will examine the processes of recruitment into school activity. Next comes what is, in a sense, the keystone chapter of the study, wherein we analyze the impact of school activity on the participant. We turn, then, to examine more closely the details of participation, considering the several different types of participatory activity. One mode of school activity involves holding or seeking office, and in Chapter 7 we look at the differential activities and attitudes of these lay elites of the schools. In the last substantive chapter, we ask what participants think about their schools and the various component elements thereof, and we also ask about how the schools compare in the eyes of our respondents with other governmental units in American society. Chapter 9 attempts mainly to summarize the salient findings and suggest the main implications for further research. In Appendix A is a copy of the survey instrument.

CHAPTER 1--FOOTNOTES

1. I cite only a few of the most salient works in illustration. Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1970; Lester Milbrath, *Political Participation*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965, rev. ed., 1977; Sidney Verba and Norman Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*, New York: Harper and Row, 1972; Richard L. Cole, *Citizen Participation and the Urban Political Process*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1974.

2. In addition to the Pateman volume see in particular Lawrence A. Scaff, *Participation in the Western Tradition: A Study of Theory and Practice*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975; Geraint Perry, ed., *Participation in Politics*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972; Dennis F. Thompson, *The Democratic Citizen: Social Science and Democratic Theory in the Twentieth Century*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

3. For summaries of the research findings see Milbrath, *op. cit.*; Constance Smith and Anne Freedman, *Voluntary Associations: Perspectives on the Literature*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972; David Horton Smith, Richard Reddy, and Burt Baldwin, eds., *Voluntary Action Research, 1972*, Lexington: Lexington Books, 1972.

4. The initial "revisionist" findings to this effect were discussed in Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld and William N. McPhee, *Voting*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954. See also Robert A. Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956; Dahl, *Who Governs*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961; Herbert McClosky, "Consensus and Ideology in American Politics," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 58 (June, 1964), pp. 361-382.

5. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960. See also Peter Bachrach, *The Theories of Democratic Elitism*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1967; Jack L. Walker, "A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 60 (June, 1966), pp. 285-95.

6. For one comprehensive review see Hans B. C. Spiegel, "Citizen Participation in Federal Programs: A Review," in David H. Smith, ed., *Voluntary Action Research, 1973*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973, pp. 259-297.

7. One among the many studies in this area, but certainly among the most substantial and incorporating the findings of many others, is George R. LaNoue and Bruce L. R. Smith, The Politics of School *Decentralization*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973.

8. I am indebted to the work of Pateman, *op. cit.*, for much of what follows.

9. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963.

10. In addition to the Almond and Verba data, see the study by Robert Weissberg, *Political Learning, Political Choice and Democratic Citizenship*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975.

11. For contrasting evaluations of the PTA which agree on this supportive role see James Koerner, *Who Controls American Education?*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1968; and Neal Gross, *Who Runs Our Schools*, New York: John Wiley, 1958.

12. "Toward an Understanding of Public School Politics," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 52 (Dec., 1959), pp. 1032-51.

13. *The Logic of Collective Action*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

14. W. Lance Bennett has recently argued that many forms of conventional political activity may have relatively little meaning for those who engage in them, no matter how often. Activity calling for individual initiative, however, or involving certain other dimensions of autonomy and conflict, may be very important even if they are rare. See *The Political Mind and the Political Environment*, Lexington: Lexington Books, 1975, esp. Ch. 6.

15. We refer here to the first edition of his book. In the recent revision he attempts to reformulate his schema to take account of the multidimensionality revealed by Verba and Nie and others.

16. On this point in particular see my "Research on Political Participation," *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 19 (May, 1975), pp. 323-341.

17. My colleague, John Sprague, and Louis Westefield have recently produced a masterful review of the literature bearing upon the effects of context on political behavior. Hopefully, some version of it will soon be made available for the general audience. Presently it accompanies a research proposal. Illustrative work may be found in Mattei Dogan and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Social Ecology*, Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969, 1974.

18. For one important study of the effects of community context, see Robert D. Putnam, "Political Attitudes and the Local Community," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 60 (Sept., 1966), pp. 640-654.

19. On St. Louis school politics see, among other sources, LaNoue and Smith, *op. cit*.

CHAPTER 2

The Community Contexts

The primary nature of our research was not that of the community study, and we have not sought in any complete sense to relate the schools in each of our six districts to their respective community settings. Indeed, none of the six altogether constitutes a genuine community of comprehensive institutional or social coherence and integrity. Apart from the school district itself and the social interaction that is engendered by its functioning, there is no patterning of activity with comparable spatial or social dimensions, especially in Normandy, but in varying degree also in the other districts. What we shall attempt, here, is to describe the main features of each school district; its social composition, its fiscal situation, the issues that confront its schools and something of its recent history of school-related controversy.

In selecting districts for study we sought to achieve diversity, and we succeeded. As Table 2-1 shows, for the year prior to the time of our interviewing, the tax rate in St. Charles is twice that in Edwardsville, and rates of increase over the eight year period vary from Edwardsville's 14.7 percent to Granite City's 63 percent.

Table 2-1

Tax Rates per Hundred Dollars Assessed Valuation, Selected Years

	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles
1965-66	2.395	2.448	3.74	3.25	3.25	3.95
1969-70	2.733	3.330	4.99	4.05	5.19	4.99
1972-73	2.747	3.911	4.75	4.30	5.19	5.53

Assessment practices vary too, of course, and so does the amount of state aid. Consequently, the levy may or may not indicate what money really is available to the schools. In Table 2-2, however, we see the total dollars spent in each district for each pupil. Again the disparities are great though the patterning is different. St. Charles and Normandy impose a high levy but are still unable to spend very much, especially in comparison with Ladue, blessed as it is with great wealth and a modest public school enrollment.

Table 2-2

Per Pupil Expenditures, Selected Years

	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles
1965-66	525.81	470.80	555.87	831.29	587.05	454.00
1969-70	778.19	726.72	845.28	1169.00	779.99	723.57
1972-73	947.73	1065.96	1183.74	1635.41	1082.25	975.30

A third dimension of comparison is that of present size and rate of growth. Table 2-3 presents the basic data which show that St. Charles is a growth district, Edwardsville is stable, and the others are experiencing at least some degree of enrollment loss.

Table 2-3

School Enrollment, Selected Years

	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles
1965-66	4710	12,093	8806	5466	6948	6502
1969-70	4874	13,307	8745	5736	8106	7420
1972-73	4840	12,888	7550	5042	7749	7982

We turn now to profiles of the individual school districts. Where they are available we will present appropriate demographic information, but our main effort will be to suggest the kind of community each one is so that the patterns of school participation may be more fully understood.

Edwardsville

Edwardsville, Illinois, is by far the most rural school district included in our survey. About one-half of the district's population of 22,689 live in the city of Edwardsville. The rest is scattered through the surrounding farm land and small farm towns. Edwardsville is the county seat of Madison County. It is also the location of a Southern Illinois University campus. These two factors (the county seat and the university) are responsible for a fairly large number of professionals, mainly lawyers and academics, who live in the Edwardsville school district.

Edwardsville is one of the oldest communities in Illinois. Its founder, Ninian Edwards, was territorial governor and, after statehood in 1818, U.S. senator. The town is laid out much like many other midwestern county seats. The county courthouse sits in the town square surrounded by the central business district. Visually Edwardsville stands in stark contrast to the other Illinois city included in our study: Granite City. While Granite City is very flat and soot-covered, Edwardsville is situated in a hilly area and is far enough from major industry not to be bothered by air pollution. Shade-covered streets make their way through attractive neighborhoods. Most of the housing consists of well-kept single family dwellings. The central business district, while not large, has the appearance of reasonably good economic health.

The school district's administrative offices are rather symbolic of the style and climate of the Edwardsville School District. The offices are located in a large old white frame house with a huge porch, a large yard, and many shade trees. In contrast, the Granite City offices are in a new, efficient looking, business office that sits close to several of the many railroad tracks cutting through Granite City. When initial contacts were made in the Edwardsville School District informing the school officials of our research and arranging for the collection of data compiled and kept in the superintendent's office, we were struck by the relaxed, rather homespun, style of the administrators. The difference in style was particularly accented when contrasted against the hustle-bustle of the Granite City school administration office. And the atmosphere of the Edwardsville administration seemed to reflect not only the character of the office but the traditional style of the community itself.

Edwardsville is an old community, one of the oldest in Illinois, and it once played an important role in the politics of the state. With the growth of other urban centers its prominence receded, but it is only in the last decade that Edwardsville has begun to feel the impact of suburbanization. Although Edwardsville is about thirty miles from St. Louis, it is statistically and functionally a part of the St. Louis metropolitan area, albeit on its easternmost boundary. The functional ties are derived in part. Edwardsville is attached to the metropolitan area in two principal ways. One is as the county seat of Madison County, which includes much of the industrial area of Illinois bordering the Mississippi and tied economically to St. Louis. The other is through Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, which was built just outside the town in 1965. Its students come from throughout the metropolitan area and many of its faculty and staff commute from the St. Louis side of the river. Events at the University draw attention and attendance from a wide area, and the result has been to pull Edwardsville much more fully into the metropolitan community than it had been before. Nevertheless, in both style and attitudes, especially among those long resident in the area, Edwardsville and the surrounding towns retain a clear and distinct identity.

Edwardsville's 1970 population was 11,070, a 10.7 percent increase over its 1960 population of 9,996. The city can be described as thoroughly middle class. Although not as affluent as districts in St. Louis County, Edwardsville is one of the wealthier cities in Madison County. Median income in 1970 was $11,019, mean income was $12,436. Nearly thirty-two percent of the working population was employed in jobs classified as either business, managerial, professional, or technical. Blacks constitute about five percent of the population, and they also are mostly middle class. School achievement for blacks is 12.1 years, considerably above that of any other black population elsewhere in Madison County, and not greatly different from the 12.3 median years of education for the entire city. Median family income for blacks was $10,385--far above the median income for blacks in Madison County.

The growth of Edwardsville is apparent from housing and mobility data. About seventy-three percent of the families in Edwardsville lived in the same house in 1970 as they did in 1965. This figure is very close to the comparable data from most of the cities in the Normandy School District and is considerably lower than the more residentially stable communities in St. Louis County: Olivette 94.2%, Frontenac 85.3%, Kirkwood 85.5%, and Ladue 95.2%. About three-fourths of the housing units in Edwardsville are owner occupied. The median value of the housing stock is $15,900. The median value of the Madison County housing stock is about $2000 less.

Half of the housing in Edwardsville was built prior to 1940. About one-sixth is less than ten years old (as of 1970).

The Edwardsville School District was established in July, 1950, and at that time covered eighty-four square miles. Since that time the size of the district has doubled, and now includes 169.5 square miles, a considerable amount of which is farm land. Edwardsville was the only district in which we interviewed any farmers. Farm land around Edwardsville is not the richest in Illinois, but its value is enough to assure that there are few poor farmers in the area.

The people we interviewed from Edwardsville were very positive about their school district. Respondents of all the school districts in our survey gave high marks to the performance of their schools, but none felt better about their schools than those in Edwardsville. Over eighty-eight percent of our respondents in Edwardsville said they thought their schools were doing a good job. The reasons offered for the positive evaluations were mostly the same offered in the other districts, but the people in the Edwardsville subsample were somewhat more likely to mention the quality of the school system's personnel as the reason for their positive evaluation.

When we asked whether respondents thought their school system was changing for the better or for the worse, more in Edwardsville said they thought the schools were changing for the better than respondents in any other school district. In fact, nearly sixty percent thought the schools were getting better; only 4.5 percent of the respondents in Edwardsville said their schools were changing for the worse--the lowest response rate of this nature of the six school districts. When we asked our Edwardsville respondents what was the most important problem facing the Edwardsville district, 13.6 percent said there were no problems, the most frequent such response obtained from the six school districts. Problems mentioned most frequently were finances, discipline, and overcrowded facilities. Two respondents mentioned racism.

The positive evaluation of the Edwardsville district is interesting when viewed in the light of some school district data we have collected. On many of these dimensions, Edwardsville falls on an extreme end. For example, the Edwardsville School District has the lowest per pupil expenditure, the lowest average daily attendance, and the lowest local school tax levy. And over an eight year period, 1965-66 to 1972-73, as Table 2-1 shows, Edwardsville's tax levy percentage increase was the lowest of our six districts--less than two percent a year. In comparison, the Granite City increase in tax levy was sixty-three percent. Whether coincidental or not, it is interesting and a bit puzzling to find that the school district where the price of education is the cheapest is also the one which gets the highest positive evaluation.

We found little evidence of political conflict concerning the Edwardsville School District. There was a small controversy over the existence of "new math," and after some parental pressure, a curriculum change was made towards more traditional mathematics instruction. The parents perceived the school system as very "responsive" in this area--and for those who did not like "new math," this change in school policy tended to reinforce their positive attitudes about their school system. We heard some expression of either discontent about--or from--residents associated with the Southern Illinois University. One person from the university thought the school system was "provincial" and wished to see the schools follow a little more of an "innovative" approach. She said: "They think they have an innovative system--but it is only physical. They do not respect individual differences in children." Generally criticism from people associated with the university was "constructive," and they were optimistic about the school system's future. Some in the district were a little suspicious of the university people and their impact upon the school system. Others, however, felt the presence of university people contributed to the quality of the schools. One person explained why she thought the schools were changing for the better: "With lots of professional educators in the district, there are lots of good ideas of education." Another said the schools "are doing great--that's why we pay taxes and put our children in there." We found some controversy in Edwardsville as in Granite City concerning the athletic program. Specifically there was a publicized issue over the possible firing of the basketball coach.

Nearly ninety-eight percent of the people interviewed in Edwardsville said that it was a good place to live. Here, too, Edwardsville got the highest rating. The reasons for liking Edwardsville were the same as elsewhere: location, schools, friendly neighborhoods, safe streets, etc. There is a substantial basis for this evaluation. Edwardsville is a very stable community. It is reasonably prosperous and growing at a pace that can be absorbed without destroying traditional patterns. It is an attractive town with ample open space around it. Yet it is within easy driving distance from a major metropolitan center. The school system is thought to be working well.

An important quality of the school system which is not often appreciated is its past and projected enrollment stability. In the eight years for which we have data, the enrollment increased by 130 students or about three percent. The enrollment increased gradually from 1965-66 to 1968-69 --dropped gradually for three years--and then went up the following year.

Projections are for the enrollment to remain stable--perhaps increasing by a very small rate. This long period of enrollment stability has allowed the district to establish and maintain the necessary facilities for the number of students in the district and not have to worry about problems caused by increasing or decreasing enrollment. What is a major issue in many school districts is thus a relatively minor problem in Edwardsville.

Again, the style of the Edwardsville district is much less hectic and formal than that of the other districts. In many respects it is more of a country town school district than a suburban one. It is partly this atmosphere that generates criticism of its "provincialism." The university will continue to have an important impact on the schools, partly because its faculty and staff become involved as active citizens and partly because of professional study and advice from SIU-E of and for the local schools which are sometimes regarded as an unofficial laboratory. As the superintendent of the Edwardsville School District told us, "[We are] "being studied to death." Whether the traditional style and broad satisfaction that now characterize Edwardsville schools can be maintained in the future is unclear, but nowhere else in our survey, and perhaps in few places anywhere, is there to be found such a combination of stability without stagnation.

Granite City

Most people, on first driving through Granite City, would not think it attractive. And it is not hard to discover the basis of this repugnance. Granite City is a steel mill town. The air is filled with smoke and evil smells. The streets are criss-crossed by a maze of railroad tracks. The soot from the mills settles on everything. Interviewers had trouble finding houses because the soot obscured the lettering on street signs and the numbers on houses. Granite City is located on the Mississippi River flood plain in Illinois. No hills give variety to the landscape, only the smoke stacks. The downtown area is old and ugly. Many of the commercial businesses have moved several miles east of the central business district to a highway that used to run through the outskirts of town. That area is now cluttered with fast food restaurants, small shopping areas, gas stations, etc.--and a relatively new and very large high school.

Most housing in Granite City consists of modest single family dwellings. There are, however, somewhat larger, newer and more "fashionable" residential areas on the fringe of the city where the soot is not so heavy, though the smell of the mills is still pervasive. A visitor to Granite City might wonder why anyone would build a reasonably attractive home in that location. The answer is that there is another side.

By an overwhelming majority, the people we interviewed in Granite City said they liked living there. Moreover, the replies seemed to be not just a passive acceptance (well, we live here, I guess we like it okay."), but an indication that people actively preferred living in Granite City and would be reluctant to leave if given the opportunity. One person we interviewed commented: "Even those that should know better like living here." In short, despite the apparent shortcomings of the physical environment, despite the visual unattractiveness of the area, most we interviewed were generally as happy living in their city as were residents from any other city in which we interviewed.

In follow-up to the question asking if respondents liked their community, we asked what they liked or disliked about the community. Aspects frequently mentioned in Granite City included 1) safe, low crime neighborhoods, 2) close proximity to a big city and thus a variety of entertainment opportunities, 3) high quality schools, and 4) it being home. That is to say, Granite City residents mentioned the same reasons for liking their community as anyone else. Implicit in some answers to this question, however, and explicit in others, were racist sentiments. Some openly admitted that they found Granite City attractive because no blacks lived in the city. Others hinted at a connection between the good qualities of Granite City and the absence of a black population. Nevertheless, for whatever reasons, we were constantly struck by the positive evaluations of Granite City. One person interviewed, who admittedly did not like Granite City ("it smells!"), expressed total bewilderment as to why most residents like their life in Granite City. "People, for some reason," he told us, "actually like living here." Some interviewed seemed quite oblivious to the physical unattractiveness of their city, even mentioning the attractiveness of neighborhoods as why they liked Granite City.

Granite City is the largest city included in our survey, and the Granite City school district is the largest school district included. It consists mainly of Granite City itself with a few other unincorporated areas and small villages. There has been some new semi-suburban development around Granite City in the unincorporated areas, and people interviewed in these areas were often active in their township government. Politically, numerically, and economically, however, Granite City dominates the school district.

In 1970 the population of Granite City was 40,440. This was an increase of less than one percent from 1960. The working population of Granite City is largely blue collar. Only about sixteen percent of the work force is classed as professional, technical, business, or managerial, about half that in Edwardsville and one-fourth that in Ladue. The median income of Granite City is relatively low ($10,331), the median years of education is 11.0. The population is quite homogeneous, with few who are either very rich or very poor. Families with an income below the poverty level constitute about four and one-half percent of all Granite City families--which compares relatively favorably with other cities in our study. In contrast only eighteen percent of the families have a yearly income greater than $15,000.

The 1970 census reports six blacks living in Granite City; apparently, they are at the Granite City Army Depot. In the 1970-71 school year, six blacks attended school in the Granite City school district out of a total enrollment of 14,942. Granite City is a stable community. In 1970, 88.4% of the Granite City households were occupied by the same family as did in 1965. Only Ladue and Olivette, of all the cities in our study, exhibited greater residential stability, and not by much. About thirty-nine percent of the women in Granite City over sixteen were employed. Granite City has a somewhat older population, with the lowest percentage of persons under eighteen years of age living with their parents. It also has the lowest percentage of private school attendance. This is despite a large Catholic population. Granite City is characterized by an important ethnic presence. Ethnicity does not show up very well in census data because most ethnics in Granite City are now third generation or more, but the existence of large numbers of people who identify themselves with distinctive ethno-cultural traditions is unmistakable. The predominant strain is Polish and generally Slavic, and it gives tone to much that happens in the community.

Despite the near total absence of a black population in the school district, and despite the stability of the district's population, race is a very salient issue in Granite City. We often encountered the underlying "fear" that blacks would soon be migrating to Granite City. Most who voiced this expectation tended to associate black settlement in the area with a subsequent arrival of all the problems normally tied to inner city living: crime, delinquency, declining property values, drug traffic, etc. Granite City is located very near the predominantly black city of East St. Louis, a city ravaged in recent years by virtually every serious urban ailment. Moreover, before and during the period of our interviews in Granite City, racial disturbances did plague the school district immediately adjoining Granite City. These considerations were on the minds of some of our respondents. Racial problems have existed in areas close to Granite City for several generations, and no blacks have migrated to Granite City. Nevertheless, fear of black settlement and racism were in evidence. One school board member told us that people liked living in Granite City "for no other reason than because no Negroes live here." He added, though, that blacks would "inevitably" move into the area and that he was "afraid" of the probable reactions and consequences.

In such a thoroughly working class community politics often revolves around the division of the spoils of office, and in recent years many of the industrial areas on the "East Side" of the Mississippi River have known politics primarily in this way. It might therefore follow that in Granite City schools would be caught up in struggles for patronage and contracts and be administered in a manner that was less "professional" than in the other districts included in this study. In many ways, however, the exact opposite is true. From all outward appearances the superintendent and his staff have a freer administrative and policy-making hand in Granite City than did counterparts in the other districts. The superintendent of schools in Granite City is given nearly free rein over the operation and governance of the schools. The school board serves primarily to legitimate the superintendent's actions, giving their "democratic" but rather rubbery stamp of approval. The board is active in the budgetary process, but only to assure that there will be enough revenue. In the day-to-day operation as well as on most broad policy decisions the superintendent exercises broad discretion.

One factor greatly contributing to the superintendent's hegemony in policy making can be found in how the residents of Granite City view their schools. The short answer is that schools are sacrosanct. Education is a term of reverence and is widely regarded as a process through which a kind of secular salvation can be achieved. Nowhere else in our study was there so strong a faith in the benevolent power of education and the resulting virtue of the schools and their personnel. Pursuant to this faith they believe that education is a professional matter, one best left to professional educators. One should no more promote the direct influence of the general citizenry regarding educational policy matters than on serious medical problems. Therefore, most participation in Granite City that centers on the educational arena is supportive participation (raising money through PTA work, etc.). The school board is also supportive, serving to insulate the superintendent from direct public pressure and to maintain financial revenues.

The special place of education was constantly in evidence. Both the superintendent and the school board president took pride in informing us that never in the history of the Granite City School District had a tax levy increase or bond proposal failed to gain voter approval. There was considerable educational innovation in Granite City, reflecting administrative discretion in policy making. For example, one elementary school taught reading skills, to all grades, using a St. Louis newspaper exclusively as instructional material. The school district's central administration is housed in a new, large, efficient, and well managed office building, very similar to the administrative offices for Granite City Steel.

This "holiness" of the schools is, in part, attributable to working class parents who wish for their children to be upwardly mobile: an "I want my kid to have it better than me" mentality. Based on knowledge of the occupation of the respondent's head of household and the occupation of the respondent's father, we constructed a measure of occupational mobility as a surrogate for social class mobility. By simply dichotomizing occupational status, we were able to classify our respondents into four mobility groups: 1) those upwardly mobile (high occupational status of respondent, low occupational status of respondent's father), 2) the same high (high respondent, high respondent's father), 3) the same low (low respondent, low respondent's father), and 4) downwardly mobile (low respondent, high respondent's father). (Surprisingly, nearly six percent of our sample fell into the latter category.) Almost fifty percent of our Granite City respondents are in the "same low" category. This is a larger percentage than the comparable figure in any other district in our survey. Over eighty-six percent are categorized either as "same low" or "high respondent-low respondent's father." Those in the "same low" category looked to the schools as a road towards the goal of upward mobility for their children. Those who had a higher occupational status than their father tended to give their own education credit for the higher status. Both of these attitudes tended to place the school in a very strong position and to encourage deference to professional expertise regarding who should run the schools and how.

Parents we interviewed took pride in claiming that the Granite City school system was among the best run in Illinois. They further felt that their school system was by far the best of any school system in the immediate area (including, specifically, Edwardsville). Those we interviewed seemed certain that their schools were geared to provide their children with the background, knowledge, and ability requisite for successful college admission and attendance. One of the few criticisms we heard voiced was the failure of the schools to provide good vocational training, an ironic gap in a place like Granite City. There were a few who objected to the nature of the educational program, but most were happy to let the school's superintendent make the decisions that would continue to assure a high quality educational program. One board member told us that he was proud that the Granite City district adopted a "new math" program and made it work, unlike the Edwardsville district which adopted new math and then had to drop it due to pressure from unhappy parents.

We did find some pressure by the public on the school system in one area: athletics. We talked to two school board candidates who ran for the school board because they were unhappy with the athletic program (i.e., Granite City was not winning enough games). A third board candidate, whom we did not interview, was also reported to have run for office because of his dissatisfaction with sports. (His wife told us, "You probably don't want to talk to him. The only reason he ran for the school board is because he was mad at the football coach. The only contact he has with the school is on Friday night [when the team plays].) That athletics should be the focus of citizen discontent, however slight, and the issue inducing participation is a matter of considerable importance and often either overlooked or dismissed contemptuously as of no interest by students of these matters. In Granite City, as elsewhere, much community pride is wrapped up with the high school teams. Winning and losing is translated into victories and defeats for the city. Of course, this is more true in some districts than others, but it is especially prominent in a community like Granite City where working class status and a steel mill atmosphere combine to create constant anxiety about the true worth of the town. A victory over a "nicer" place can do much to alleviate the unease. Elements of this feeling can be found most everywhere.

When people who were dissatisfied with the athletic program were elected to the school board, their concern for this completely overshadowed their interest in the educational program. They were more than willing to defer to the superintendent on educational matters. The athletic program was one of the few school issues in Granite City that was ever debated. One board member told us, in very explicit detail with his weekly schedule of activity, of how he kept in touch with the sports program by attending all games, going into the locker room after the games, attending sports banquets, going to some of the practice sessions, etc. This is largely what he meant when he told us he "kept up with what's going on at school."

Other than athletics the only dissatisfactions we heard expressed were contained in vague references to improper and unethical administrative and school board decision making: relatives getting jobs, the lining of selected food suppliers' pockets, "it's all politics," etc. We were unable to find explicit evidence supporting these allegations. The references were to some vague "they" and the improprieties remained equally unspecific. Sometimes "they" would become a school board campaign issue, and candidates would campaign against some kind of "conspiratorial" school government. This image of school board politics was not widely expressed and seemed not to affect very substantially the overall favorable rating accorded the schools. It seems mainly to be an image carried over from other political arenas in the area, the city or the county, where small groups of more or less corrupt politicians are suspected of dominating policy making and doing so to the advantage of special interests.

In the future of the Granite City schools, there is one major problem on the horizon. This was mentioned by the superintendent and several of the board members. Like many other older suburban school districts, Granite City has emerged from the baby boom era with lots of teachers, staff, and facilities and is now facing an aging population and a declining enrollment. In the 1971-72 school year enrollment in the Granite City school system dropped for the first time in many years. And while the falloff has not been a large one--one or two percent a year--it will become much larger before the attendance levels off. Most informed members of the district are aware of this problem and worry about it. But so far they remain optimistic, continuing to express confidence in "the experts." The school officials, they say, will cope somehow with the problems that stem from declining enrollment well in advance.

The district is blessed with a stable financial condition. With all the heavy industry and railroad property, Granite City has a solid tax base. The assessed valuation of Granite City's school district is far higher than any other school district in our survey. The tax rate is the second lowest of all districts. When we asked our respondents in Granite City what was the worst problem facing their schools, fewer mentioned finances than did respondents from any other district except Kirkwood, and there the salience of the reorganization problem blocked out almost everything else. Over ten percent in Granite City could not think of a problem --compared to nine percent in a "model" district like Ladue. Thus, school participants in Granite City were highly supportive of the schools, deferential to the professional personnel, and confident about the future. And the excellence attributed to the schools greatly contributed to the high marks Granite City respondents gave their community in overall evaluation.

Kirkwood

Although the Kirkwood School District is composed of either all or part of six cities, consideration of the city of Kirkwood dominates any discussion of the school district. The characteristics of the city--median family income, housing stock, the racial balance, or whatever--have more impact on the school district than any other single item. The district can be thought of as a parent unit surrounded by satellites of varying degrees of importance. The satellites contribute to the size, substance, and inertial movement of the whole system, but are dwarfed by the parent unit, so that as Kirkwood the city goes, so goes the Kirkwood School District.

Kirkwood is one of the oldest suburban cities in the St. Louis metropolitan area. It was incorporated as a city in 1865. There was widespread sentiment at the time that the city of St. Louis would never come anywhere near Kirkwood and that consequently open country would continue to lie between the city and this semi-rural community. Kirkwood's growth was somewhat independent of the growth of St. Louis. It served as a market town for the surrounding area. Part of its growth, however, derived from its location on the main line of the Missouri Pacific railroad which provided Kirkwood a privilege less common to St. Louis area communities than in Chicago or New York, the privilege of commuting by rail. Even today the AMTRAK train between St. Louis and Kansas City stops in Kirkwood.

Other cities in the Kirkwood School District were incorporated much later: Des Peres in 1934, Frontenac in 1947, Oakland in 1920, Glendale in 1912, and Huntleigh in 1929, and represent more "purely" suburban development. The seniority of Kirkwood is connected to some of the character of politics in that city. One direct result is a type of citizen participant that is rarely known in newer suburbs: second and third generation "Kirkwoodians" with a real sense of devotion to and "belonging" in the city.

The 1970 population of Kirkwood was 31,890. It is about six times larger than Des Peres, the second largest city in the district. The population of Kirkwood is increasing--but not nearly so rapidly as it did during the baby boom years of the 1950's. Some of the western sections of the city are still relatively undeveloped, and there is some housing construction in this area. The central business district of Kirkwood is relatively depressed, like many rural towns or older cities brought within the orbit of urban centers. Several new shopping centers have been built in areas surrounding Kirkwood, drawing business away from the older commercial area. Considerable attention has been given to efforts to revive Kirkwood's central business district, but the old residents put up resistance to any proposals that might attract heavy traffic from the outside with attendant problems of overcrowding, pollution and crime.

In our survey, we asked respondents how they thought of, or evaluated, the place in which they lived. Ninety-five percent of the Kirkwood respondents told us they liked Kirkwood. When we probed what respondents liked about their community, often mentioned was the quality of the neighborhoods, the proximity to a large city and its cultural facilities and sports events, safety, community facilities, outlets for community activity, etc. In these respects they were much like Granite City, yet two communities could hardly be more different from one another. The differences showed up in references to the existence of lots of trees and green grass, the physical attractiveness of the community. One word we heard frequently mentioned was heterogeneity. Kirkwood was alleged to be a good place to raise children because they were confronted by and became familiar with a wide diversity of people. It turned out, however, that Kirkwood respondents used the word "heterogeneous" in a very limited way. Their concept of heterogeneity could all be safely included within the confines of the middle class. Diversity meant something like living between a Republican engineer at McDonnell-Douglas and a Democratic university professor, and in the same part of town as a black medical doctor.

Only 6.6 percent of the population of Kirkwood is black, mostly centered in one corner of the city. White collar occupations account for seventy percent of the working force. Median income in Kirkwood is $13,854. Only about three percent of the families have incomes less than the poverty level. In 1970 about three percent of the Kirkwood work force was unemployed. Median education is 13.0 years. Close to twenty percent of the school age children go to private schools. Only twenty percent of the owner-occupied houses are valued under $15,000, and most of the housing stock in Kirkwood is of high quality.

Underlying the high praise for Kirkwood, though, interviewers often detected the widespread fear that the city was declining along many fronts. The older residents often lamented that "things" were not as good as they used to be. A fifty-two year-old engineer from McDonnell-Douglas commented that when he moved to the St. Louis area in the early 1950's, he was told that Kirkwood was the best place to buy a house and raise his family: good schools, good neighborhoods, good shopping, and good location. Now, he claimed, Kirkwood did not have that reputation. We heard fears that blacks were moving into Kirkwood--or soon would be--destroying property values. Some respondents lamented the slow rate of housing construction in Kirkwood compared to the higher rate of apartment construction. These people feared that apartments would destroy the single-family dwelling residential life typical of Kirkwood. Other respondents indirectly criticized a drop in the quality of the schools, complaining that the school system did not produce as many National Merit Semi-Finalists as it did some years ago.

Ironically, it seemed that much of the opposition to both the renovation of the central business district and building of a new shopping center close to one of two interstate highways that go through Kirkwood can be traced to this fear of community decline. Most people interviewed clearly did not want any outside traffic coming into their city and were therefore against any proposal that would attract outside traffic. They wanted to preserve what they found attractive in Kirkwood. And there was much fear that any change would amount to change for the worse.

One interesting phenomenon we observed was how respondents evaluated their school district in comparison with others in the metropolitan area. Younger parents would often compare their school district to the district immediately west of Kirkwood: Parkway. They were envious of the enormous growth and "newness" of the buildings and programs in the Parkway district. Older residents, on the other hand, tended to think back a decade or two when the Kirkwood schools were also in a growth period. These people were more likely to view the district's present problems in historical perspective and compare the Kirkwood schools to other older districts in the area.

They often compared their schools (usually favorably) to Webster Groves, and accepted as inevitable that the Kirkwood schools must face problems.

The largest city in the Kirkwood district, other than Kirkwood, is Des Peres. Des Peres is, in most every sense of the word, a bedroom suburb. It is predominantly composed of upper-middle class white Protestants. Of 5333 residents, in 1970, only five were black. A mere 1.1 percent of the population is classified as having incomes less than the poverty level. The median income of Des Peres is $19,119 (compared to $13,854 in Kirkwood). Many people interviewed in Des Peres worried about being in the Kirkwood School District--a concern somewhat akin to being helplessly tied to a slowly sinking ship. Again this concern cannot be traced to responses to specific interview questions. Rather, this concern would surface in dialogues stimulated by open-ended questions. One consequence of this feeling was that many we interviewed were contemplating sending their children to parochial schools. One Des Peres lady commented that her children "were the only ones left on the block" who attended the Kirkwood public schools. She was seriously considering private schools for her children for the following year. In fact, it was not uncommon to interview parents who either had sent their children to private schools, then public, and again to private; or who had children in public and private schools simultaneously.

In contrast to the advanced age of Kirkwood, Des Peres is a very new city. Less than ten percent of the houses were built prior to 1939. Des Peres is growing rapidly. The population increased 23.3% between 1960 and 1970. The city tax rate of Des Peres is a little over one-half that of Kirkwood (35 cents per one hundred dollars assessed valuation compared to 63 cents in Kirkwood). Only 0.8 percent of the housing is multifamily.

While Des Peres is predominantly residential, there are a number of businesses lining a major highway. Also a medium-sized, relatively new, shopping center is located in the southwest corner of the city.

Frontenac is an upper class community with a population of 3,920, but only about half of it is in the Kirkwood district. The medium income of Frontenac is $32,000. Like Des Peres, Frontenac is primarily residential in composition. There is also one of the poshest shopping centers of the metropolitan area. Frontenac's population increased 26.9 percent between 1960 and 1970, but there are indications that the growth is nearly complete. Only thirteen new housing units were built in 1973.

Those Frontenac residents in the Kirkwood district often expressed dissatisfaction with being in that district. One person commented that he wished he could sell his house and then buy another house across the street so he could be in the Ladue School District. He was very happy with everything about where he lived except with the schools, particularly when contrasted with those in Ladue. Many of the respondents from Frontenac wishfully compared their school district to Ladue's: wishing that the Kirkwood schools were as good, the tax rate as low, that they were faced with as few serious problems.

A part of Glendale (population of 6891) and all of Oakland (population 1609) are also in the Kirkwood School District. These towns are middle class in makeup. The median income of Glendale is $17,387, that of Oakland is $13,178. Both towns consist predominantly of single family houses, mostly two or three bedroom, on one floor. The populations remained relatively stable between 1960 and 1970.

While respondents in these two towns share misgivings about the Kirkwood School District's future with people elsewhere in the district, they are still convinced of the high quality of the Kirkwood schools. Whereas Des Peres and Frontenac respondents look to either Ladue, Clayton, or Parkway school districts as points of comparison to evaluate their own district, respondents in Oakland and Glendale (in a similar fashion to respondents in some of the poorer parts of Kirkwood) tended to look towards the Webster Groves School District for a reference point in evaluating the Kirkwood district. One person commented, "Well, we've got problems. But they are not as bad as Webster's, and we seem to be handling ours better. I guess all things considered our schools are very good." Webster Groves is in fact a community much like Kirkwood: a middle class older suburb of what urbanists sometimes refer to as the "inner ring" of suburban growth. Whether it is the comparative base line that leads people to develop a positive or negative evaluation or the other way around--develop your opinion and look for an appropriate comparison--the relationship is certainly there.

In the southeast corner of Kirkwood is a small, black, unincorporated enclave called Meacham Park. The word "park" is as much of a misnomer as can be imagined. Meacham Park is one of several small black enclaves in St. Louis County that are isolated from the large black areas of St. Louis city and county. It has a long history. It seems to have been established originally as a segregated living area for black slaves and servants of wealthy families in the Kirkwood area. One of the older and more wealthy sections of Kirkwood is immediately north of Meacham Park. The black area is separated from other neighborhoods not only by race but by three major roads. After spending some time in Kirkwood, driving into Meacham Park is like entering a different world. You leave a rather stately suburban neighborhood and discover unpaved streets lined by small houses, often in serious disrepair. Meacham Park is, in fact, a slum.

It is the existence of this slum which is partly at root of a large, complex, and emotional issue that has rocked the Kirkwood School District for the past several years. The issue has been labelled a "reorganization" issue and, in fact, is not just one issue or problem but rather two that have been inextricably intertwined both by the accidents of time and conscious design. In 1973 a federal judge ordered the Kirkwood School District to integrate more fully black students from Meacham Park into the rest of the district. This decision was soon followed by a letter from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare ordering the district to comply with the court order by submitting a desegregation proposal within thirty days under threat of cutoff of federal monies. When the HEW letter was received by the school board, black enrollment at Turner Elementary School, located in Meacham Park, was 99.5 percent of the total enrollment while the percentage black enrollment of the entire school district was 13.3. The faculty of the Turner school was 88.2 percent black, while the black percentage of the district faculty was 9.7.

Concurrent with the racial issue was the second problem resulting from the declining enrollment of the Kirkwood schools. Although there has been a small increase in the overall population of the community, the student population is steadily declining. There are several reasons for this. Kirkwood experienced enormous growth after World War II. Many families bought houses and raised children. School enrollments steadily increased throughout the 1960's, peaking during the latter part of the decade. For the most part, the people who moved into the community stayed put and very stable neighborhoods were established. To illustrate, between 1965 and 1970 over eighty-five percent of the Kirkwood families continued to live in the same house. The inevitable outcome of this stability was that there are many middle-aged parents in Kirkwood whose children have outgrown the public school system. Another factor contributing to the declining enrollment is that what population growth Kirkwood does have is mostly due to the construction of apartment complexes. Apartment dwellers are much less likely to have school age children. Even among our respondents, who all were active in school affairs and who all had children, only 13.8 percent indicated they had children under five years of age. By contrast, in St. Charles, a rapidly growing community, 36.4 percent had children under five.

After the peak year of 1968-69, the enrollment dropped 18.2 percent in five years. The initial falloff, of course, was mainly at the elementary school level. Concern over enrollment trends resulted in the school board contracting with a consulting firm to analyze and project enrollment figures for twenty or so years. The projection showed the decline in enrollment would continue for some time, not leveling off until sometime in the 1980's. The declining enrollment has created a number of difficult problems: empty classrooms, too many administrators, too many teachers, etc. The problem became so severe and the diseconomies so intense that early in the 1970's it became apparent that some elementary schools would have to be closed and elementary school boundaries shifted. Thus, "reorganization" of the school district was inescapable.

Closing "neighborhood" elementary schools presented difficult political problems to the school board. In general, most respondents we interviewed said they understood it was necessary to close some schools, but no one wanted their school to be the one whose doors were to be closed. Attachment to the concept of "neighborhood schools" is very strong in

Kirkwood--predictably strong among those residents who thought their school was likely to be closed. We interviewed numerous parents who found the prospect of sending their elementary age child to a school outside their "neighborhood" abhorrent. And because it also involved the issue of racial balance the problem was more complicated than it might otherwise have been.

Several considerations were relevant in making decisions regarding which schools were to be closed. Geographical location of each elementary school, population trends in various parts of the district, size of individual school buildings, quality and age of individual school buildings are all aspects that merit attention when making this kind of decision. In addition, there were political constraints on the possible decisions. While it would have been convenient if the solution led to by objective criteria was similar to that suggested by politican considerations, this was generally not the case. Because of enrollment and location it made economic sense to close the elementary school in Des Peres. Yet those in Des Peres were happy with the existence of an elementary school in Des Peres that served Des Peres alone. It was "their school." The closing of the Des Peres elementary school would bring to the surface much of the latent dissatisfactions with the Kirkwood School District, dissatisfactions that were somewhat muted, or appeased, by the existence of a Des Peres elementary school. And strong dissatisfaction in Des Peres might be followed by secession or flight to the outer suburban fringe.

Another school whose closing was generally considered imminent was the elementary school in Meacham Park. This school was one of the older in the district, and certainly one of the more dilapidated. Moreover, its location was in the farthest corner of the district. Moreover yet, the school board realized that very few white parents would cheerfully accept sending their children into Meacham Park to attend school. Closing the school would alleviate that upsetting situation. But black political leaders were also upset with the potential loss of a community institution (in a community of few institutions of any kind). The Turner school in Meacham Park served other functions besides housing an elementary school. It was a meeting place for various organizations and for adult and/or continuing education classes held at night. For several years, people in the area, the school board, and people from a community college in Kirkwood had worked towards making the school building a viable and constructive Meacham Park resource, as well as making the elementary school one of high quality. After much alleged progress towards achieving these goals, many were strongly opposed to the closing the the Turner School. Somewhat similar problems of lesser intensity plagued the closing of other schools.

So something had to be done about the structure of the school system for two reasons: racial integration and declining enrollment, and both of these issues were subsumed under the label "reorganization." It is fairly clear that the blending of the two issues was not just coincidental; it resulted from a conscious effort by the school board. It was thought, quite correctly, that it would be much easier for the school board to explain (and find empathy for) the financial waste of half-empty elementary schools than the necessity, or desirability, of integrating black students more fully into the school district, particularly when the Turner School was reputedly one of high academic quality. The board's strategy was to suggest reorganization proposals to solve the problem of declining enrollment and with the same solution satisfy the HEW order. They could do this without publicly discussing, in any explicit manner, racial integration. The discussion would be focused on the enrollment problems, thus avoiding the inflammable race issue. The board was able to carry out this strategy because of the high saliency of the enrollment issue. People were willing and eager to discuss that issue. If the enrollment issue had been less pressing the racial issue would surely have surfaced much more than it did.

From all indications, the school board strategy was remarkably successful. In our interviews we hardly heard a respondent speak of the two concurrent problems separately. They talked of "reorganization." The board was able to focus the debate on solving the declining enrollment problem--an issue of considerable controversy, but an issue with much less potential for disruption than the race issue. People in Kirkwood seemed to accept that racial integration would be a by-product of reorganization to solve the enrollment problems.

It should be mentioned that the reorganization issue did not arise in an otherwise tranquil district. School politics in Kirkwood are a "hotbed of participation," like those Robert Wood discusses on the politics of education in "suburbia."

> The programs and expenditures of suburban schools are quite likely to engender a brand of active, if not frenzied, political behavior that stands in stark contrast to the more controlled decision-m making in other parts of suburban government.
>
> Viewed in these terms of quantitative pressures, the school problem exaggerates whatever conflicts and disagreements that already exist.
>
> The essence of politics--compromise among competing values, majority decisions between competing values--is ruled out. The school citizen must talk only about school. . . . [People participate in the schools by] laying bare their most fundamental convictions.
> [p. 186, 187, 191]

The Kirkwood district has been plagued by controversy for many years, but the source of the conflict is hard to pin down. Perhaps the best way of putting it is to think in terms of conflicting educational ideologies--something akin to Wood's "values being laid bare." Kirkwood citizens expressed no consensus when it came to their comments about what should go on inside of the classroom: what goals the educational system should strive towards or which methods would be best to use to obtain the goals. We heard various respondents 1) lament the lack of fine arts courses, 2) lament the failure to teach the "basics," 3) lament the existence of only a few "learning resource centers," 4) lament the failure of the schools to provide college-bound students with a properly oriented, and useful education, 5) lament the failure of the schools to provide students with an education relevant to or useful for future employment (a variation of this was to accuse the schools of only being concerned with the education of the college-bound students), 6) lament the lack of open classrooms or other "innovative" educational methods, 7) or contrarily, lament an educational program that is too "innovative," and inattentive to the basics, and 8) lament the failure to offer enough "special education" programs. The list is not exhaustive.

For a number of years (1965 to 1972) the school board elections in Kirkwood were very hotly contested. One school board candidate we interviewed reported it was not uncommon for a candidate to spend $4000 in an election campaign. In contrast, it was not considered unusual for a serious candidate in other districts to spend less than $50.00. Candidates in Kirkwood produced brochures, advertised in newspapers, conducted extensive telephone canvasses, mass mailed campaign literature, rented billboards, etc. Candidates often reported making speeches seven nights a week. One losing candidate for the Kirkwood school board subsequently ran successfully for state senator. He claimed that more time and effort and money was invested in a losing effort in the school board campaign than in a winning effort in the state senator campaign.

While the school electorate in Kirkwood seems to have been characterized by sharp cleavages for many years, in the early 1970's two competing factions came into existence for the purpose of electing school board candidates. The actual existence of organized factions must be viewed in some perspective; and, depending on whom in Kirkwood you ask, the degree of organization varies enormously. Probably, the alleged organizations of these factions were much greater than anything actually in operation but even so there was much more mobilization than elsewhere in our study.

It is important to explain what piece of reality is described by our use of the word "factions." Never did we find people meeting together, acknowledging membership rolls, electing officers, defining agendas, etc. --things normally associated with an organized group's behavior. But we did see and hear of school board candidates who were selected, supported, and elected by a well organized faction.

To help sort this out, it is useful to conceive of a coalition of networks of friends. Many respondents reported becoming active in a school board election in response to encouragement from a friend. The dissemination of information and activism can be thought of in terms of what is supposed to happen to a chain letter. Let's say five people jointly decide to write a chain letter. They each send the letter to ten of their friends with instructions to them to send the letter to ten of their friends, etc. The letter is communicated widely and rapidly. Because people have several pockets of friends (neighborhoods, church, work, garden clubs, PTA, League of Women Voters, etc.), the letter spreads through many "networks of friends." This pattern is very similar to what apparently happens in Kirkwood school board campaigns.

Of course, this implies the existence of some kind of inner circle.

The existence of the "inner circles" was often alleged. The identity of the people who allegedly constituted this inner circle varied with the informant. When we interviewed those whose names had been mentioned as composing this circle, they would usually deny it. Some who were extremely active, though, gave us better insight into how "their group" was constituted. When one school board candidate was specifically asked about organized group support in the campaign, the response was something like: "Well, I guess you could call it a group--but it is made up of different people at different times--for each election--people move in and out." This will be explained more fully after a discussion of the motivating issues or sentiments behind the groups.

The background for the development of two competing factions in Kirkwood school politics can be traced to a situation that existed in the latter part of the 1960's. During these years the Kirkwood School Board, everyone agrees, was factionalized and divided to the point of being unable to act in any definitive fashion. Most of the board's important votes resulted in a tie. The superintendent was generally described as weak and unwilling to exercise much initiative. The school district seemed to function by bureaucratic inertia. It was during this period when some like-minded people decided that definite action had to be taken. In general these people seemed to have little in common except for some shared sentiments about their school system. They judged the school system to be relatively declining in quality, because it was not "moving forward." They felt the district should move to embrace educational innovation. They felt the educational program needed to be made more diversified and thus more relevant to a wider array of types of students. They felt the district needed many additional special education programs. And they feared the district was heading towards a financial collapse.

At this time the "enemy" was seen as older citizens of Kirkwood whose children had left the school system. These older residents were accused of voting for anyone or anything calculated not to increase their taxes. These older residents were held responsible for electing a school board that initiated very little progress. The strategy was clear to those people who wanted policy change--they would control the voting balance on the school board by electing new board members who would be sympathetic to their views. If degree of organization is measured by success, this coalition must be judged as very effectively organized. Starting with the school board election in 1970, with two candidates being elected each year for three year terms, this coalition elected eleven of twelve school board members in the six year period 1970 through 1975.

It was common practice for this coalition, which never had a name, to work for a slate of two candidates for each election year. The two candidates would campaign together, endorse each other, produce campaign literature and advertisements which contained both names. All of this had the effect of doubling the exponential growth rate of "chain letter" campaign politics. Not surprisingly, the one time this coalition did not win both school board positions contested, candidates did not run as a slate. Rather, there was disagreement among the coalition as to who the second candidate should be. The disagreement was not resolved and three candidates from the same camp ended up in the race. With the coalition divided--only one of the three candidates won.

This election was a very salient event to participants in the coalition. It caused a severe setback in their plans for the election and brought about another split school board. The school board was divided to the point of not being able to elect officers, and the county superintendent had to cast the deciding votes for the three officers of the board. The "opposition" candidate who was elected was very outspoken and his presence on the board resulted in many controversial board sessions which received heavy coverage from the press. A member of the coalition told us they learned their lesson that year (1971) and never again would they make this mistake of being divided: "We cannot afford that kind of setback."

The second coalition or faction grew in response to the first. Some residents felt that an unrepresentative minority was taking control of the school board. Those in this second coalition accused their protagonists of being "too liberal," and made liberal sound like a dirty word. They thought the "liberals" financially irresponsible. They thought the proposed educational reforms were reckless and ill-advised. This latter coalition was tied to the "back to basics" movement in education that exists in many school districts. The leaders of this coalition were not merely reacting at a "gut level" to issues they did not understand or changes they found. They were serious about education and had done their homework. They did not oppose the reforms merely because they represented change; the mentality of those composing this faction was worlds apart from the "book burners" who have appeared elsewhere in the country.

The labels "arch conservative" and "fanatic liberals" were increasingly bandied about as elections became more hotly contested. While labels like these are usually awkward, they are roughly descriptive of two distinct approaches to education. Some members of the liberal coalition claimed that the John Birch Society dominated their opponent faction. Interestingly, the conservatives often mentioned leaders of the Kirkwood League of Women Voters as being leaders of the liberals. Each coalition regarded the other in the worst of possible light: whether it be with regard to goals, strategies, values, integrity, or intelligence. The level of hostility was high. Few were found who made attempts to understand the causes or source of conflict. Few seemed willing to search for compromise.

From our observations, the conservative coalition did not appear to be as well organized as the liberals. Other than two board members, names of leaders were not mentioned nearly so often. There were no "conservative" slates of candidates. One candidate commented that slates ought to be illegal--it not being fair for two candidates teaming up to defeat one. One curious and maybe meaningless fact about the conservative candidates was their place of employment. Most of them were engineers at McDonnell-Douglas Aircraft Corporation or in a few cases from Monsanto.

Two reputedly key members of this conservative coalition were two school board members elected in 1969, the year before the liberal coalition's string of victories. During their three year term, they were active participants in a controversy which greatly politicized Kirkwood school politics. In 1970 the school board commissioned an investigation by a consulting firm to project the district's future enrollment. From that basis building and other needs would be projected. The report was badly in error, projecting an enrollment increase. Based on this report the school board proposed a tax levy to pay for the added costs resulting from the increased enrollment. From this point the actual events get murky. One of the above-mentioned board members reported the following:

> When the study was first reported to the board, I was a little suspicious--I couldn't see how the district could grow that much. But since I was new on the board, I didn't say much--I deferred to the others. But later, my doubts kept increasing--I conducted a little investigation on my own. I tried to figure out how the numbers that led to the prediction of increased enrollment were obtained. I'm no expert--but it soon became obvious to me that the

> report was wrong. The district's enrollment was going to go down--not up. So I got busy and told the people to vote against a tax increase that we didn't need.

This board member, and the one other (we seldom heard one name mentioned without soon hearing the other), wrote a letter to the local newspapers withdrawing their support from the tax levy. The tax levy issue engulfed the school board in controversy, and the impact is still being felt. In our interviews we were told wildly divergent stories of the events resulting from the conflict over the tax levy. One person told us that one board member was "run out of town" after several people in the community arranged for him to be dismissed from his job. A board member told us his life was threatened. Another told us that the newspapers were out to get him--and would seek to take his picture at school board meetings only if they could catch him in an embarrassing pose.

In the course of events, the heated issue moved far beyond the debate over whether enrollment would increase and the necessity of a tax levy increase. In retrospect, the board members who supported the tax levy increase admit they should have been more skeptical about the projection of increasing enrollment but hasten to add that the tax levy increase was needed whether enrollment increased or not. In retrospect, they argue that the intense conflict was not over the tax levy, or the enrollment, at all. Rather, it was the result of the methods and strategies employed by the board members who worked against the levy. Specifically these members were accused of never presenting their enrollment projection figures to the entire board, or informing the board members of their intention of announcing opposition to the tax levy via a letter to the newspapers. In short, the board members were accused of not following channels. These two members were accused of trying to make the rest of the school board look ridiculous--to undermine their public support. Going public with their minority report was, in the view of many, a grievous breach of the etiquette of public school politics.

The two board members who wrote the letter to the newspaper defended that action by arguing that they had little or no input on school board decisions. Further, they felt there was little probability of the other board members listening to, much less accepting, their arguments. Since this condition existed, and since they felt there was no need for the tax levy increase, they simply felt they had to go public. The two board members both reported a kind of civic duty prompting them to use the most effective means at their disposal to defeat the proposed tax levy increase. To say the least, this was a very troubled period. Open hostility and antagonisms characterized board meetings. Hundreds of people attended the board meetings--the board sessions were tape recorded "by both sides." Letters were written and requests were made at board meetings for one, several, or all of the board members to resign. There was a lot of press coverage. This period, and these events, laid the groundwork for the conflictual nature of school politics in Kirkwood throughout the early 1970's. The lines for conflict were clearly drawn.

Our study began immediately after all this. A new superintendent had been hired, and the controversy had somewhat abated. But the year of conflict over the tax levy was still on the minds of many Kirkwood school activists. Even the prospect of forced integration had not resulted in as much conflict either among school board members or the residents. When respondents were asked for their evaluation of the school board, it was not uncommon to hear: "Well, much better than several years ago--when there was so much trouble. You don't hear so many bad things now--or read about the board in the newspapers."

Given this history, most felt there would be severe disputes in Kirkwood when the district was forced finally to act concerning integration and declining enrollment. The tone of most newspaper articles seemed to anticipate trouble. In fact, however, the district remained quite tranquil as detailed plans developed and were implemented. There are several reasons why a potentially disruptive issue was resolved--or at least diffused--with a minimum level of open hostility. By the time the "reorganization" issue came to decision, the liberal faction had taken complete control of the school board. As of 1974, this faction was responsible for the election of all six school board members--including a black, a minister, a former Kirkwood school teacher, and a former leader in the Kirkwood League of Women Voters. Therefore the board was not characterized by the divisiveness and open hostility that had earlier typified school board meetings. In addition, there was enormous pressure for consensual decisions. Indeed, when asked what was the worst problem facing the Kirkwood School District, several people mentioned the lack of diversity on the board.

Secondly, there seemed to be a pendulum-like reaction to the controversies of earlier years. Residents of Kirkwood clearly desired a school board that would resolve problems in an orderly and consensual manner. They had traditionally taken pride in their schools, and the newspaper reports of troubles damaged the perceived quality of the school district and, by extension, of the whole community. Even those who had been openly hostile to the liberal faction did not want to let their feelings surface. One person even expressed the notion of "peace at any cost." In this context many of the conservatives gave up active opposition. Thirdly, the newly hired superintendent seemed to be a master at public relations. To some extent he may have been granted something of a "honeymoon period," unhampered by intense and deep-seated community controversy. Most importantly, the accidental overlap of the two problems of racial integration and declining enrollment worked to the benefit of the school board. Since either issue might blow up with disastrous results, there was broad support for lending every effort toward community cohesion.

This is not to say that there were no problems. Rather, these problems and ill-feelings never really surfaced. In Kirkwood interviews, the "reorganization" issue brought with it the symbols of busing and integration that, in other places, situations, and times, have often resulted in very serious conflict. There was some fear of violence, cutoff of federal monies, busing blacks into white schools, busing whites into black schools, discipline problems associated with black students, and so on. Some thought "they" were "putting something over" on "the people." Many were suspicious of the school board, talking about board meetings held in private and other such evidences of conspiracy. But the level of conflict remained very low, surprisingly low given the school district's history of major conflicts in school politics.

The Kirkwood board said it was going to open the reorgnization decision making to the public, implying that this was a sharp break with past board's decision making processes. For a period of about one year, during which most of our interviews were held, the school board in conjunction with the new superintendent conducted "coffees." Someone would invite neighbors to the house to meet with board members (usually two) and possibly the superintendent. The purpose of these "coffees" was to provide channels of communication between the board and the "people": questions could be asked and demands could be made known. Also--for the purpose of providing a forum for citizens to influence the reorganization decision--several districtwide meetings were held. At both coffees and the district meetings the board could explain, rationalize, to skeptical people the necessity of closing some of the elementary schools: present figures, charts, and "authoritative" studies to legitimate the "reorganization."

The school board members said they wanted to open lines of communication and illustrate to the residents that "we care what you think." Such a strategy might have backfired. It might have provoked conflict or encouraged submerged hostilities to come to the surface. But this did not happen. As a result of these "coffees" and district meetings people in the community were convinced of the necessity of reorganization and persuaded to support the board's plan for implementing reorganization. By "opening up" the decision making, and by creating public forums for debate the school board generated much decision making leeway for itself. The public forums provided legitimacy for whatever decision the board made. The board was able to sell its own competency. An unmistakable impression left by interviews was the perceived inevitability of reorganization felt by the respondents. Many would say something like "I don't like it--but it has to be done." The board not only shifted the focus from racial integration to reorganization--but also dampened the conflict generated by that issue.

Given this rather unusual history, it is not surprising that the Kirkwood School District respondents stand apart from the others in many ways. Our Kirkwood sample had a disproportionate number of men, 41.2%. The other district samples were all under thirty percent. More people in Kirkwood attended school board meetings at some time than in others: considerably under forty percent for the others. Also, 57.5% of our Kirkwood sample participated in some fashion in school board elections. Less than thirty percent did so in the other districts--in some districts far less than thirty percent. The Kirkwood sample also stood out by giving the highest response rate 1) in the frequency with which activism was stimulated by some kind of motivating issue, 2) in saying that an opinion changed as a result of activity, 3) in the proportion of participants in the 50-99 age bracket, 4) in saying that when they cut back their school activity they would become more active in another area, and 5) in replying that school participation had taken its toll in time. The Kirkwood respondents were also high in community organization activity.

At the time of our interviewing in the Kirkwood School District, it seemed that the conservative faction had either gone underground or given up, and in April, 1975, the liberal coalition supported two unopposed candidates.

But school reorganization issue is not a one time thing. Projections of enrollment show that the problem will plague the district for many years. Empty buildings, too many teachers, too large an administrative staff, and increasing financial problems are all products of the declining enrollment. Given the history of the community, and a general trend toward increasing conflict in education, there seems to be little long term prospect for tranquil school politics in Kirkwood. In 1976 the "conservatives" came back to win a seat on the board, and in both 1976 and 1977 there were heated contests. Moreover, in 1977, Kirkwood, like most other area districts, turned down a proposed tax increase by a considerable margin. Thus, for whatever reasons, the strongly participatory culture of the Kirkwood community was not any longer enthusiastic about its public schools.

Ladue

"The Ladue schools are committed to educational excellence." So says the Ladue Board of Education, and we discovered very few people who did not believe that educational excellence was the hallmark of the system. Moreover, the Ladue School District is admired, or at least envied, throughout the St. Louis area as an excellent school system without any serious problems. In our questionnaire we asked: What do you think is the worst aspect of your school system? and, What would you say is the most important problem facing the schools in Ladue? A good many school activists in Ladue could not think of an answer. There seemed to be no worst aspect or important problem. Some respondents answered with an incredulous stare, as if to say, "How could you think we have problems--this is Ladue." One went so far as to say that the Ladue schools are "the best in the country." Whether or not such superlatives are warranted, the excellence of the Ladue schools is accepted both within the school district and beyond.

And for good reason. By most of the usual criteria employed for comparison, Ladue ranks at the top of the entire metropolitan area. The district boasts the second highest per pupil expenditure of any district in St. Louis county: $1635.41 in the 1972-73 school year. Expenditure per pupil is nearly $450 more than that of Kirkwood, and nearly $700 more than Edwardsville. Among our six districts Ladue's salary scale for teachers reaches a top that is $3000 more a year than the next highest district, and $5000 more than the lowest district. Compared to the other five districts, Ladue has the largest percentage of teachers with advanced degrees, the lowest teacher-pupil ratio, a relatively low tax levy, a high assessed valuation, and very stable and wealthy residential areas. It is not surprising, then, that no one perceives any serious problems. Facilities are in excellent condition and are well equipped.

The Ladue School District was created in 1936. At that time it was comprised of the villages of Ladue, Deer Creek, and McKnight, villages which combined to make the incorporated city of Ladue that same year. The district later expanded to contain the cities of Olivette and Crystal Lake Park, and portions of Creve Coeur, Frontenac, Huntleigh Village, Richmond Heights, and Westwood, as well as a few pockets of unincorporated land. The district covers about twenty-five square miles and has a population of around thirty thousand. The city of Ladue, with a population of 10,491, and Olivette with a population of 9,341, account for nearly two-thirds of the district's population. Most of the remaining one-third of the district's population is centered in Creve Coeur.

Ladue is unambiguously upper class. As of 1970, the mean income was $41,598, the median income $32,274. By this measure Ladue is the wealthiest city in the St. Louis metropolitan area. The median years of education in Ladue is fifteen. Only 1.2% of the population is black, 1.7% of the families are classified as earning less than the poverty level. Nearly ninety percent of the work force are employed at jobs classified by the census as white collar. The median age of Ladue is 39.1 years, the oldest population of any city included in our survey. Only fifteen percent of the Ladue families have children under six years of age, the lowest figure of all cities. Over ninety-five percent of the Ladue families lived in the same house in 1970 as they did in 1965, making Ladue the most residentially stable community of any for which we could secure data.

The population of Ladue increased 10.8 percent from 1960 to 1970 (from 9466 to 10,491), but most of this growth was early in the decade and has since stabilized. Twenty-six new houses were built in 1973, all single family units. Only one percent of the housing in Ladue is valued under $15,000. This compares to twenty percent in Kirkwood, forty percent in Normandy, and eighty-six percent in Pine Lawn, which is also part of the Normandy district. Ladue's city tax rate is a relatively modest $0.35 per $100 assessed valuation (Kirkwood's is $0.63, Olivette's $1.05, Normandy's $0.50, Frontenac's $0.64, and Creve Coeur's $0.20).

Ladue is a beautiful residential suburb. It is mostly composed of large houses, many of these on large wooded lots, with exclusive subdivisions served by private roads. Ladue lies close to several major highways, fancy shopping areas, and next door to Clayton, the county seat and center for many professional and business offices. Nearly everyone is prosperous and many are very wealthy. There is only one basis for any significant division, and that is religion. There is a large Jewish population in Ladue, and a fair number of Catholics. Nearly forty-five percent of our Ladue sample was Jewish. Religious background has not resulted in major political conflict in Ladue, but at times it has been the basis of both school and civic controversies.

The other major city in the Ladue district is Olivette with a population of 9341, an increase of 13.1% over 1960. Although not wealthy if measured by Ladue's standards, Olivette is solidly upper middle class. Its median family income of $16,966 is considerably greater than the St. Louis county median income of $12,392. The mean income of Olivette is $20,977. In 1970 Olivette had a small black population comprising only 2.1percent of the total population but there is some recent growth in this proportion. About three and one-half percent of the Olivette families are classified as living with incomes which place them below the poverty level. Almost fifty percent of the work force of Olivette work in jobs classified as either professional, technical, business, or managerial. Only five percent of the owner-occupied housing is valued less than $15,000. Of the thirty-five new homes built in 1973, all were single family units. The municipal tax rate in Olivette is $1.05 per one hundred dollars assessed valuation, one of the highest in St. Louis county.

A large part of Creve Coeur is also in the Ladue School District. Creve Coeur grew rapidly in the 1960's, from 5122 in 1960 to 8967 in 1970 (a 75.1% increase). Most of the growth areas of Creve Coeur, however, are not in the Ladue School District. Creve Coeur is, like Ladue, a very wealthy suburban city. Its median income is $23,315, the mean income is $30,479. Over fifty-five percent of the working population is employed in either professional, technical, business, or managerial jobs. Less than one percent of the population is black. Only one and one-half percent of the families receive incomes less than the poverty level. Two percent of the housing is valued under $15,000. Also, like Ladue, Creve Coeur has a significant Jewish population.

So the Ladue School District is one with a predominantly upper-middle to upper class clientele. The wealth of the community and the comparative absence of significant social or educational conflict was reflected in our data in a variety of ways. For example, fewer Ladue respondents (6.9%) indicated that some issues were the motivating factor prompting their school activity. Fewer said they felt a duty to be active in school affairs. Fewer said they had changed an opinion or attitude as a result of their activity. They talked less often about school affairs. When asked how long in the future they expected to be active, more in Ladue said only until their children were out of school. Ladue participants did just about as much as activists elsewhere, but it seemed to mean less to them and to have less effect on their lives.

Ladue participants seemed to have become active in the schools because it was expected. It was part of being a proper citizen and parent, part of the community norms, though it fell short of the notion of duty. One respondent said it was their "basic nature to be involved." Another felt an obligation to "serve," to take "my turn." One respondent had recently moved to Ladue from Kirkwood. When asked about the activity of other people in the Ladue School District, the reply was merely, "It's certainly not what I'm used to." Another respondent said people in Ladue were not "really active" but "are very demanding." Participation in Ladue seems to be "the proper thing to do." It was rarely aimed at changing school policy. There seemed no need of that. Rather, participants were supportive, of the schools as they were, and of their children.

Several people we interviewed mentioned lack of competition for board seats as one of the school district's worst problems. They thought it was proper to have contested elections. When a woman ran in 1970 she provided the first contested election in six years. We interviewed several people who had run for the school board because they felt the board seats should be contested, but they were not particularly unhappy about losing. Perhaps the most common conception of problem facing the Ladue school system was maintaining the current high standards. As for the rare case of purposive activity, it was exemplified by one person who said that participation had had impact on the schools--they now used new forms of report cards.

Ladue is not really utopia, of course. Some Ladue respondents saw problems, at least in the near future. One was declining enrollment. The enrollment decline was neither as dramatic or controversial as the falling enrollment in Kirkwood. It was a fact of life, though, that the school district would have to face. Declining enrollment does not pose as much of a financial burden on Ladue as it does on Kirkwood, since their wealth allows them some diseconomy. Some people actually thought declining enrollment would bring benefits in the form of smaller classes and more individualized attention. Some thought that the root of the enrollment problem was the large number of parents who sent their children to private schools. Nearly one-half (46.2%) of school attending children in Ladue attend private or parochial schools, and this, it was felt, drained off an important component of community support for excellence in the public schools.

Some other problems were mentioned. Finances was one, even though compared to other districts, Ladue has no financial problems at all. Perhaps when no other problem could be thought of, finances is an easy answer. After all, schools always have financial problems. A few complained that the Ladue schools were "insulated from the rest of the world." A few criticized the schools for being "too competitive." Several accused the schools of only being concerned with college bound students and not being concerned with vocational training. One person said the school system seemed to be "unaware or disinterested in a child who is not a high academic achiever." Others noted a problem in the education of the "middle of the road child who might be lost in the shuffle--the very smart and the very slow get a lot of attention." Some mentioned discipline as a serious problem. One referred to the "racial problems" of several years ago which concerned the hiring (or lack thereof) of black teachers. Two people mentioned as the worst aspect the "fact" that the school system was dominated by Jews.

Yet none of these problems were perceived to be very important matters. Respondents quite often seemed to mention a problem more because they were asked to than because it was of any real concern to them. Most were very happy with their community and their schools. People in Ladue are in a sense very conservative about their schools. They believe that they are excellent, and they want to keep them that way. The one serious threat to the current happy state is "outside interference." Our respondents saw this possibility arising in two different forms. One was the possibility that Ladue might be forced to merge with another school district in order to alleviate the problems of declining enrollment. Ladue participants did not want to merge at all and especially not with a district of less wealth and greater social heterogeneity. The second aspect of this problem is the threat of "equalization." For some time now, there have been efforts in Missouri to equalize both the tax burden and the per pupil expenditure across the state. The threat of this happening has come from both court actions and legislative proposals. Neither in Ladue nor elsewhere in the state is the prospect imminent unless the U.S. Supreme Court alters its view and mandates further steps toward full equalization. But in a community like Ladue it constitutes one of the few real clouds on the horizon.

In summary, it should be stressed that the citizen participation in a placid, rich community like Ladue means something quite different than it does in Kirkwood, its next door neighbor. Ladue has few issues and little conflict. It is wealthy, and its residents enjoy high status. They do the high status things which, of course, include being active in the community and in its schools. But the participation is seldom purposive; it is almost reflexive. Accordingly, it has little effect on the participants or on the school either. There is very nearly as much participation in Ladue as in Kirkwood, but its significance is very different.

Normandy

The Normandy School District is unlike the other five districts in our survey. Rather than consisting of one or two principal communities, the Normandy district includes within its boundaries twenty-three separate municipalities. Normandy borders on the City of St. Louis and of all the districts in our survey it is the most heavily affected by spillovers from the city. The total 1970 population of the school district was 48,458, nearly a nine percent increase over the district's 1960 population. The average size of the twenty-three cities is 2,106, but they range from 6306 (Normandy) to 122 (Norwood Court). In area, the cities range from 1.159 square miles (Pagedale) to 0.023 square miles (Margona Village). The area of the entire school district is only 8.904 square miles, and most of the communities in the district are very small. Over seventy percent of the district's population is centered in the seven largest cities: Bel Ridge, Hillsdale, Normandy, Pagedale, Pine Lawn, and Vinita Park, and we will consider them in greater detail.

Normandy School District's close proximity to the north side of St. Louis City is at the root of the most important demographic characteristic of the area. For the last several years blacks have been moving out of the city into adjacent areas of St. Louis county at a rapid rate, and, in fact, the proportion of the city's population that is black has been declining rather swiftly.

The Normandy area is adjacent to the black sections of St. Louis and much of its housing stock is moderate in size and cost. Consequently, much of this black suburbanization has been in the Normandy School District. Data from the seven largest cities in the district are presented in Table 2-4. They clearly illustrate the dramatic growth of black population in this area, and these data do not reflect the additional growth between 1970 and the time of our interviews.

Table 2-4

Normandy Communities' Population Change, 1960-70

		1960			1970	
	Total	Black	Black %	Total	Black	Black %
Bel Ridge	4395	3	0.06	5561	18	0.3
Hillsdale	2788	0	0.00	2599	647	24.9
Normandy	4452	42	0.94	6306	86	1.2
Northwoods	4701	0	0.00	4611	1400	30.4
Pagedale	5106	111	2.10	5571	1276	22.9
Pine Lawn	5943	3	0.05	5773	1665	28.8
Vinita Park	2204	1	0.04	3684	448	12.2

But simply between 1960 and 1970 the black population increased 3462 percent.

For the most part, blacks moving into the Normandy School District were upwardly mobile and lower-middle or middle class. They moved to the suburbs when they could for the same reasons everyone else had before them; better housing, safer neighborhoods, and better schools. The median income of these cities is modest though much higher than several of the more depressed areas of St. Louis county. For example, Kinloch, a black enclave in north St. Louis county had a median income of $5916. Wellston, another depressed area, had a median income of $6701. By these standards, the seven Normandy School District cities are wealthy. Nevertheless, the 1970 median income of St. Louis county was $12, 392 (the national median was $9596, and the Missouri state median was $8[illegible]35), and the Normandy area figures are below that. Thus, while the Normandy School District

Table 2-5

Normandy Communities' Class Status

	MEDIAN INCOME	MEDIAN SCHOOL YEARS	% WHITE COLLAR
Bel Ridge	$10,233	11.1	21.4
Hillsdale	8,489	9.1	8.1
Normandy	11,028	12.1	29.5
Northwoods	12,162	12.2	22.5
Pagedale	9,736	10.3	13.0
Pine Lawn	9,493	13.2	13.1
Vinita Park	10,705	11.8	22.4

is not a poverty-stricken slum, it is hardly affluent. It is probably fair to say that the black migration has not appreciably affected the class level of the area, but it certainly has affected the perceptions of what constitute the central problems in the schools.

A good many Normandy people tended to discuss their community or schools in conscious comparison with neighboring areas, and the comparison disturbed them. The seven major Normandy cities have smaller median incomes, fewer white collar workers, and less education than the other St. Louis county areas in our study. Other indicators of poverty and/or social disorganization also show the contrast. In the Ladue and Kirkwood districts, 1970 unemployment ranged from 1.1 percent to only 3.3 percent, and

Table 2-6

Poverty Levels in Normandy Communities

	Percent Unemployed	% Families in Poverty	% Females Employed	% Female Head of Families
Bel Ridge	4.7	3.4	52.4	11
Hillsdale	7.0	9.5	44.9	10
Normandy	2.5	4.7	44.3	10
Northwoods	3.2	5.0	52.2	8
Pagedale	4.8	6.4	45.1	11
Pine Lawn	8.7	8.4	50.5	12
Vinita Park	3.6	5.0	48.9	10

the other indicators are also much lower.

Another illustration of the economic status of the area is provided by housing data. Much of the housing stock in the Normandy School District is relatively old and not very high in assessed valuation.

Table 2-7

Housing Condition in Normandy Communities

	% Houses Built Before 1939	% Houses Owner Occupied Valued Below $15,000	% Housing Multi Family	% Same House 1965
Bel Ridge	25.4	63	22.8	68.2
Hillsdale	68.0	95	10.9	67.7
Normandy	35.0	40	42.3	76.1
Northwoods	7.0	31	1.1	75.3
Pagedale	53.7	87	9.7	71.5
Pine Lawn	62.8	86	21.1	62.5
Vinita Park	38.9	50	22.1	75.5

Compare these data to similar data from our other St. Louis county cities.

Table 2-8

Housing Condition in Kirkwood and Ladue District

	% Houses Built Before 1939	% Houses Owner Occupied Valued Below $15,000	% Housing Multi-Family	% Same House 1965
Des Peres	9.7	8	0.8	87.1
Frontenac	9.5	6	0.8	85.3
Kirkwood	28.7	20	10.1	85.8
Ladue	25.5	1	3.2	95.2
Olivette	8.7	5	11.5	94.2

The magnitude of the population changes affecting the Normandy School District can be clearly seen from these data. In addition, the lower tax base provided by the Normandy district housing stock is also apparent.

As Normandy residents looked around them they saw close neighbors who were much more affluent than they were, and they saw their own community challenged by a high rate of population turnover and considerable racial change. But although they were concerned, they were by no means despondent. Normandy residents were as likely as any to think they lived in a good community (92.1 percent said they did). But as in Kirkwood, we found many Normandy people who were worried about the decline, actual or prospective, in the quality of their community and especially of its schools. Normandy respondents were quite clear about the source of their problems, however, and much less given to conspiratorial theories than people in Kirkwood. Moreover, they viewed the changing community as a positive challenge to maintain community viability in the face of these dramatic changes. Of course, the people we interviewed were active in the community and thus more committed to it than people who were not active. But we interviewed the same kind of people in Kirkwood. And by and large, the Normandy respondents seemed more willing to recognize change, not be afraid of it, and accept the challenge.

This recognition of change, and the challenge it posed to the community was reflected in much of our data. We asked our respondents if they felt a duty to be active in school affairs. While the word duty seemed to imply different things to different people, it is interesting that a considerably higher proportion of the Normandy respondents answered this question affirmatively (71.1%) than in any other district. One woman succinctly summarized the feelings we heard expressed by many: "I feel that with the changing community--someone must help." Even when people had started out with a negative view of what was happening to their community, school participation helped change their attitude. Nearly half of the Normandy respondents reported that their attitudes toward the schools became more positive as a result of their activity, and this is considerably higher than similar responses from the other districts of our study.

Normandy respondents were, like respondents from all other districts, very positive in the evaluation of their schools. This was true whether the questions asked respondent evaluation of school performance, or more specifically of the school board, the administration, or the teachers. But their general approval is placed in a context that recognizes what has been happening. When we asked our Normandy respondents what was the worst problem facing their school district, many responded in a way that related, directly or indirectly, to the changing demographic pattern of the school district. Nearly twenty percent said that race was the most urgent problem. About thirteen percent said discipline. Thirty-seven percent mentioned the catchall term, finances. About nine percent cited overcrowded school buildings (although the district enrollment is dropping--over six percent between the 1970-1 and 1972-3 school years). Normandy respondents were less optimistic about the direction of change in the quality of their schools than were respondents from the other districts. One-fourth said they thought the schools were changing for the worse (Kirkwood was next with 18.8%, then Granite City with 12.8%). Only 30.3 percent thought the schools were changing for the better. (In Kirkwood, 42.5% said the schools were changing for the better; for all other districts at least half responded for the better.) But again, if one may be allowed to add impressionistic evidence to the direct responses to questions, the feeling in Normandy was much more one of realism than it was of pessimism.

The other pervasive consideration in Normandy is the institutional fragmentation of the community. The school district is the only mechanism that combines this particular array of twenty-three municipalities, and despite efforts in recent years to effect greater intermunicipal cooperation or even merger, the civic attention of the residents is broken or bent in severely debilitating ways. There are many behavioral consequences. School activists in Normandy are less active in community organizations than our respondents from other districts. The Normandy sample discussed political affairs the least, wrote to public officials the least, read the fewest magazines and newspapers, discussed community affairs the least, and were generally less efficacious politically. On the other side of this coin, Normandy respondents were significantly more inclined to say that school activity had a greater personal impact upon them than participation in other kinds of groups.

The Normandy School District is on the borderline. It is located on the border between St. Louis City and St. Louis County. It is located on the border between predominantly white sections of the metropolitan area and predominantly black sections of the metropolitan area. It is on a kind of economic borderline with some relatively affluent areas and others on the fringe of poverty. For many the Normandy area is near the edge of the whole congeries of problems that have made many parts of American cities virtually uninhabitable: crime, decaying housing stock, residential instability, breakdowns of discipline in the schools, etc. Normandy is certainly not a slum, nor is it yet ghettoized. But its future is problematic and its active citizens see their participation as a factor that somehow can make the crucial difference.

Despite vigorous efforts to cultivate community support, however, Normandy has suffered repeated setbacks in attempting to secure voter approval of an increased tax levy. Indeed, in 1977 the citizenry twice refused to grant even majority support to a levy increase that required a two-thirds margin to pass. Clearly, however strongly committed and positively supportive the citizen activist cadre may be toward the schools, they cannot always carry the electorate at large with them.

St. Charles

St. Charles, Missouri, is one of the oldest cities in the state. Situated on the Missouri River not far from where the Missouri flows into the Mississippi, St. Charles was the first capitol of the state, and it now serves as the county seat of St. Charles County. The city grew along the banks of the Missouri initially and then spread inland. Today the older, river area is undergoing substantial restoration and development as a shopping and entertainment center. In a short tour of St. Charles one is immediately struck by the contrast between the old and the new buildings and styles. This contrast is also quickly visible in the patterns of school participation and politics in St. Charles.

St. Charles is the most rapidly growing city in our survey. Its population as reported in the 1970 census was 31,834, an increase of over fifty percent from the 1960 population of 21,189. St. Charles is a natural area for growth. It is located about fourteen miles northwest of St. Louis city but only a few miles from the metropolitan airport and from many of the major industries that are located in that vicinity. St. Charles has been linked to St. Louis for well over a hundred years by a major transportation linkage: the St. Charles Rock Road. This road runs a straight line from St. Charles to the Mississippi River levy in St. Louis and was used for transportation of rock quarried in the St. Charles area. When the railroads came they too linked St. Charles with St. Louis. And these links helped St. Charles to develop as an autonomous city long before there was anything much between them and the metropolis to the southeast.

Since the early 1960's St. Charles has been connected with St. Louis by an interstate highway, the major route between St. Louis and Kansas City. The interstate also runs by the airport and this combination of forces has facilitated the process of suburban growth to and beyond St. Charles.

There are several components in the changing composition of St. Charles that contribute to political conflict. One is religion. St. Charles, like many of the older cities in the St. Louis area, has a substantial Catholic population. In the past political conflict in St. Charles was often between Catholics and Protestants. More recently, this cleavage has been muted, but another type of religious division has emerged. On many issues, including some affecting schools, there has emerged an active group of Protestant fundamentalists. Old and new residents in St. Charles differ on other issues concerning the city or the school district. Two major city issues growing out of growth and diversity are annexation and zoning. The need for additional facilities, and the money to finance them, are more profound in St. Charles than any other community in our study.

The population changes that are overtaking St. Charles are reflected in census figures. Just under sixty-three percent of the families living in St. Charles in 1970 occupied the same house they did in 1965. The comparable figure in Kirkwood is nearly eighty percent, in Ladue over ninety-five percent, and in Granite City over eighty-eight percent. About fifty percent of the St. Charles working population is classified by the census as possessing white collar jobs. A little under thirty-two percent have jobs in manufacturing--a figure higher than any of the larger communities in our survey except Granite City (37.1%). The median income of St. Charles is $10,942. This is only about six hundred dollars higher than the median income of Granite City, but there is more diversity in St. Charles. Thus, about twenty-four percent of the St. Charles families earn an income of more than $15,000 as against eighteen percent in Granite City. Five percent were unemployed at the time of the 1970 census. Over five percent of the families in St. Charles received yearly incomes less than the poverty level. The median age of 25.9 years in St. Charles is the lowest of all cities (Ladue's median age is 39.1, Kirkwood's is 31.5), reflecting a growth that is heavily derived from young families. A comparatively large 32.7 percent of the St. Charles families have children under six years of age

age. The summary profile, then, presents a community of moderate means and rather diverse composition, whose population makes heavy demands on the schools and where there are cleavages running along the "fault lines" of length of residence and religious orientation.

Nevertheless, as in the other districts we studied, St. Charles residents were overwhelmingly approving of both community and schools. Over ninety-two percent of our St. Charles respondents replied that they lived in a good community. It is noteworthy, however, that only 5.5 percent mentioned schools as a reason for their positive community evaluation, the smallest proportion of any district in our survey. Also, more St. Charles respondents than elsewhere, when asked what they liked about their community, said only that, "It's home." There seemed thus to be considerable passivity in their approval of the community, at least compared to our other districts.

The St. Charles School District consists mainly of the city of St. Charles, plus some unincorporated area west of the city. Suburbanization has had enormous impact on the schools. From 1965-66 to 1972-73 the St. Charles School District's enrollment increased about forty-seven percent (from 6502 to 9551). With crowded facilities and rising costs, St. Charles has gone through a long series of campaigns for tax levy increases and bond issues. More about this later. During the period in which we interviewed, some classes were held in trailers that the school board had purchased for temporary and partial relief of crowding problems.

Despite the difficulties of growth and the conflicts described below, about eighty percent of our St. Charles respondents thought they had good schools. This is about the same level of positive evaluation of schools given in the other school districts examined. Over fifty percent of the

St. Charles respondents replied that their schools were getting better—a higher percentage than any other district except Edwardsville. This optimism stems from two very different sources. On the one hand, the very dynamism of growth in St. Charles has fueled a positive outlook on the future. Particularly, among the newer residents, it was felt that the future was very much on their side. Some, however, seemed to feel that with all of the recent controversies and inadequate facilities things could only get better.

Our respondents were very aware of the problems caused by growth. When we asked what was the most important problem facing the St. Charles School District, over sixty percent either mentioned finances (32.2%) or overcrowding (31.1%). Despite the apparent recognition of these problems by school activists, however, it has been very difficult to pass bond proposals or tax levy increases in St. Charles. Under the circumstances obtaining in St. Charles, Missouri law requires a two-thirds vote either to raise the tax levy or to pass a bond proposal. In most cases in recent years, a large enough coalition forms in St. Charles to defeat proposals to generate more income for the schools.

School politics in St. Charles have other elements not found in our other communities, and a review of these matters is not only intriguing in its own right; it also illustrates how intense controversies at the elite level may have little apparent effect among the backbenchers. In 1969 a group called the Christian Businessmen was organized and has taken a sufficiently active role to be called by Dr. Frank Colaw, superintendent of schools in St. Charles, the "most important thing going on in the school district." In St. Charles interviews we heard the Christian Businessmen described as anti-black, anti-integration; and, according to Colaw, they have "created God in their own image." Certainly, the Christian Businessmen can be described as politically "right-wing," espousing fundamentalist religious values. Colaw was quick to point out that the group calling itself "businessmen" is a misrepresentation. None of whom Colaw described as the "power structure" of St. Charles, the bankers and long-established businessmen, belonged to the group.

Colaw characterized the "power structure" of St. Charles as "old St. Charles." He did so to emphasize that the Christian Businessmen are composed of newer residents who have not lived in St. Charles for more than ten years. There are only about fifteen to twenty people in the core group. They meet every Wednesday for breakfast at Howard Johnson's (Colaw met with them once to discuss the school system's budget). Occupations of the inner circle include: an engineering professor, a real estate salesman, an electrician, owner of a bible store, and a couple of ministers. The group is united by its religious fundamentalism; most are Baptists. The Christian Businessmen have firm support from some thirty or forty people. Others--maybe a lot of others--float in and out of the constituency depending on the issues. Supporters of the Christian Businessmen come mainly from four fundamentalist churches: the Faith Unity Methodist Church, the Grace Gospel Temple, the St. Charles Bible Church, and the Bible Baptist Church.

The Christian Businessmen have engaged in a variety of activities. They have frequently mobilized citizens to pressure the school board and administration on issues. They have also attempted to influence the school system more directly by sponsoring candidates in school board elections. In fact, one member (the engineering professor) of the Christian Businessmen was elected to the school board. Colaw believed that this "right-wing" organization receives money from outside of the community and that they are an arm of a larger organization that is active in many areas outside of St. Charles. For example, Colaw said he "had reason to believe" that similar organizations were active in the Parkway School District and in Kirkwood. Colaw also told us that the Christian Businessmen school board member, Dr. Ben Basye, met regularly with a board member from Parkway and one from Kirkwood. Indeed, we were told several times in Kirkwood that a right-wing organization in that city was in touch with a similar group in St. Charles but the Kirkwood participants did not give it much importance. Colaw, on the other hand, regarded the Christian Businessmen as a major threat to the welfare of the district. To be sure, they sought to exercise a direct impact on the school program, and Colaw was the chief target of their activities.

The Christian Businessmen first surfaced as a major force in St. Charles School District politics during what was, literally, a "witchcraft" controversy. This issue stemmed from parental opposition to self-proclaimed "witches" speaking in the schools. During this issue a major spokesman for "right-wing" causes appeared: Laura Rogers. She was a major spokesperson for those opposed to allowing the witches to speak, and she was able to rally many St. Charles citizens in support of her position. Many of these were not explicitly tied to the Christian Businessmen, though they, in turn, supported her actively. From this point forward, the Rogers name was frequently heard in reference to citizen criticism of school policy.

A second major controversy in which the Christian Businessmen were active dealt with the fundamental content and control of the educational program. Two textbooks used in the St. Charles schools came under very heavy criticism. The first of these was a communications book entitled, "Rudy Red Wagon, Communication Strategies in Contemporary Society." The objections to this book were stimulated by the book's section on obscenity and its influence on language. The second book objected to, "Promises of America," was the basic textbook used in civics classes. The Rogers family--Laura and her husband Jim--were key figures in the textbook controversies. Jim Rogers described "Rudy Red Wagon" as containing words that were "lewd, repulsive, or disgusting" in representing citizen complaints to the school board. He, along with many others who attended a heated school board session, requested not only that the book be banned but that disciplinary action be taken against the teacher who assigned it. At another school board meeting, Laura Rogers described "Promises of America" as "profane, socialist, and the most seriously anti-American and anti-Christian thing I have ever seen." She demanded that the book be replaced.

The first of these book issues was fairly easy to resolve. Colaw appointed a faculty committee to review "Rudy Red Wagon." The committee decided that the book "was objectionable" and withdrew it from use by the students (the book was only being used by one teacher in one class). Colaw was able to insulate the teacher from further attack. But if anything, the partial victory on this issue only fired the enthusiasm for attacking other textbooks, and made the second major textbook controversy harder to control and resolve. When "Promises of America" came under fire, Colaw stood firm in defense of the book.

Those objecting to "Promises of America" pursued several strategies to force the elimination of the book from the school program. Parents threatened the school board with boycotts. Laura Rogers was instrumental in the organization of the St. Charles Christian School, as a kind of by-product of the textbook controversy. The school was to offer a "Christian" education option to those who were disenchanted with the public school program. A bookstore owner--sympathetic to the Christian Businessmen--offered the school board one thousand dollars to underwrite the cost of purchasing new civics textbooks. Also, school board members were threatened by the Christian Businessmen that in their re-election efforts they would be faced by opposition from well-organized and highly financed opponents. School board meetings during this time (a year or so prior to our interviews) were typified by heavy attendance (as high as 150 people) and many people spoke for and against the books. Members of the Christian Businessmen were often armed with questionnaires designed to survey the board members' attitudes on a variety of school matters. The board felt this was being done mostly for harassment. They voted to prohibit questionnaires being passed out at board meetings. Basye--the Christian Businessmen board member--was the only board member voting to allow the distribution of the questionnaires. (When our early contacts were made in St. Charles, we wanted to hand out a short questionnaire at a board meeting to obtain names for the subsequent survey. We were denied the opportunity to do this, because the board did not want to break its precedent of not allowing questionnaires. Basye was the only member voting to allow us opportunity to hand out the questionnaire.) The second controversy was partially resolved when students were provided the option of signing up for an alternative ninth grade social studies course. About twenty percent of the students exercised this option. "Promises of America" continued to be used in the school system.

It was in the midst of all this that Ben Basye was elected to the school board (April, 1973). The central issue of Basye's campaign was the textbook controversy. Basye's presence on the board symbolized the potential power of the Christian Businessmen making good on their threat to control school policy by taking control of the school board. Basye also represented a threat to Colaw's dominance of school politics in St. Charles and Colaw's dominance over the school board. Very simply, Basye was an uncontrollable item for Colaw.

Basye greatly contributed to yet another controversy that arose prior to the school board election in 1974. Candidates endorsed by the Christian Businessmen criticized the school board for allegedly mismanaging some of the district's funds. They specifically referred to the board's having placed one million dollars in interest-free checking accounts for three successive months in 1973. These candidates estimated that this alleged mishandling of money cost the school district between $8000 and $9000 a month. The Christian Businessmen-sponsored candidates also were critical of the board for being closed and unresponsive to citizen desires. They further argued that the school board's financial transactions should be made open to the public.

Five of six school board members signed a written statement, submitted to the press, designed to defend the board's management of funds and to deny and discredit the charges of being closed and unresponsive. Basye refused to sign the statement, saying to the press: "I think that the allegations are perfectly true. I think there is room for criticism." He thus added much legitimacy to the criticism of the school board. The school board election thus took on meaning above and beyond a contest between four individuals. The two incumbent school board members campaigned for re-election on a platform built on the school board's past behavior and performance. When the incumbents rather handily won the election, the St. Charles Journal interpreted their victory as a major "vote of confidence" for the school board.

All of this provided a context of considerable controversy for school participation in St. Charles, but surprisingly little specific effect was registered in the responses to our questions. Indeed, apart from the factors related to social class considerations, St. Charles activists were not very different from those in other more placid communities. Whatever effect there may have been was mainly indirect, contained within other, more conventional, responses. But the more prominent point is the relative absence of discernible impact.

At the same time, and in addition to the controversial school board election, there was also an election for a tax levy increase and a bond issue to finance the construction of a second high school for the district. Difficulty in passing revenue elections has a long history in St. Charles. During one two-year period around 1970, the St. Charles School District held eleven tax elections, nine of which failed. Only twenty-one percent of those voting in one 1970 election favored the tax levy. Indeed, at one point the money situation was so serious that many on the school board wanted to shut the school system down. Before the 1974 election, Colaw was quoted as saying that without the added revenue the high school—which was operating four hundred students over capacity with a projected enrollment increase of five hundred—would have to revert to double sessions. The Christian Businessmen were against the tax levy but for the bond proposal. Both tax and bond issues failed, but narrowly. Colaw said he was surprised they failed by only one percent. He had not thought it would even come that close.

Colaw was clearly the most explicitly political superintendent of any in the six districts we studied. During our interview with him, Colaw told us, "I'm the most political animal in my school district." During the 1974 school board campaign, Colaw took a very active role in support of the incumbent candidates. He was involved in "ghost writing" many of the speeches and also responsible for much of the behind the scenes management of the campaigns. Colaw referred to the victory by the incumbents as one of his major victories. He also was candid about his efforts to manipulate citizen input through PTA's and the PTA Executive Council. Mobilization of citizens in support of the school system, done mostly through the PTA's, is a major weapon Colaw has used to combat the Christian Businessmen. We did not find direct evidence of these efforts but it may well be that this explains the "normal" character, i.e., supportive of status quo school policy.

Colaw also said that he liked to plant ideas with either his staff or citizens, and then let people feel that they have come up with ideas to which he is receptive. Several times Colaw hinted at how he liked to manipulate situations from the sidelines. He rather fancied himself as being in touch with his staff and the pulse of the school district by maximizing channels of communication. Colaw said he wanted input from teachers and he is willing to accept criticism from them: "They can call me an S.O.B. and get away with it, and they know it."

Colaw thought of himself as the chief spokesman for the school board, but he only would accept one year contracts. He said that if his position deteriorated, if the board became disenchanted with his heavy-handed control, he wanted to make his departure a swift one. He indicated in 1974 that he anticipated his effectiveness would run out within five years. In 1976 Frank Colaw resigned as St. Charles school superintendent.

CHAPTER 3

Who Takes Part in School Affairs

What citizens participate in school affairs? There are surely some widely held assumptions--images of room mothers and PTA officers--that may or may not be accurate representations of the real school activist world. In this chapter we will examine the social and attitudinal characteristics of our 507 participants, comparing them when we can to other groups in the population. To begin, however, let us review what the participants themselves think about the kinds of people who do or do not do their participatory share.

We put the question this way:

> When there is something that needs to be done here in ________, what kinds of people can you generally count on to pitch in and help?

Then we asked:

> Are there some who don't do what they should?
> [If yes] Why is that?

By far the most common answer to the first question was some variant of, "The same people; the busiest ones; the ones who do everything; a small group who are always active." Conversely, the most frequent response to the second question was, "The apathetic; the people who don't care."

There were other kinds of suggestions too, of course, but these responses focus our attention on an interpretation of who gets involved and why that we might otherwise be inclined to skip. Essentially, our respondents were contending that the inclination to participate did not stem, in any immediate sense at least, from social or demographic factors, but resulted from generalized attitude or posture toward both their children and their community.

> "They [the non-participants] just don't care. They don't worry about their children?
> "They're lazy; no sense of obligation, not interested in their own children."
> "Some people seem to think somebody else can take care of their kids."
> "Parents today are too involved with themselves. They have their own lives, children are secondary."

These are statements of people who are themselves active, of course, and there is doubtless a certain amount of self-congratulation involved in these explanations. But the fact remains that for many people the proximate cause for some people to become active while others do not is that they are either of a broadly "caring and concerned" disposition or they are not. Whether hidden away in these images there are social correlates of these characterological postures is by no means clear, although a few of our respondents volunteered social factors they thought were of significance. But, again, the main factors were thought to be those of attitude, primarily toward children and secondly toward the community.

The operative concept of community has several aspects. One involves the church. Several respondents felt that "church people" were the backbone of community participation.

> "I'd look for more of a Christian type person. They're the ones who care about the town and things."

As will be noted later in the chapter, the entire sample is heavily church-going and both the church as an institution and the outlook of religious orientation are closely connected with their sense of community. A second element is the length of residence.

> "Old-timers are the ones who work. They've been here a long time and they know it's important. These transients don't care."

One other consideration involved in the notion of community emphasizes the social interaction that grows out of long residence and involvement in institutions such as church or school.

> "Somebody asks you, you've got your special friends, and you ask somebody else, and pretty soon you've got the people you need."

All of these elements of community identification may interact with the caring attitude, of course.

> "The people who work are those who are willing to give of themselves, who think of the community as a whole, and do their share."

Situational factors are thought to make some difference. Thus, "Non-working mothers have more time and they do a lot of it." Conversely, "A lot of mothers work now and don't have the time." And. "People who have the money and enjoy to do this kind of thing, they're the ones." Also, "Too many small children," and, "Probably a demanding husband, won't let her go."

A further set of factors involves "Understanding the need, especially the need for change in the schools," or, alternatively, "Ignorance is all it is. They just don't seem to know." "They aren't aware of the need." Some respondents were more tolerant. "They have different priorities, I guess."

And, finally, there are factors that reflect social-psychological considerations. "Some people don't feel free to get in and get the feel of it. They're afraid to appear square." "Some people feel uncomfortable in large groups." "They're not ready to take responsibility." And, "In the low income areas sometimes they have little confidence in themselves."

We have no real basis for estimating even among our respondents how many would subscribe to one or another of these several sets of factors characterizing those who do and those who do not take part in school affairs. The central point is that social characteristics receive little emphasis. As we turn now to consider precisely those kinds of factors, we must keep this point in mind, and, as we identify, say, socio-economic or other demographic factors of apparent interest, remember that among those who are the objects of our inquiry it is attitudes toward participation that come first to their mind when they seek to identify "Who participates."

Demographic Patterns: Assumptions and Data

We have seen that many of our respondents explained school activism by saying that some, but not all, parents "care" about their children. This, in turn, reflects what must be a nearly universal assumption; namely, that nearly all school participants are parents. Some may have very young children, some may have no children still at home. But the general expectation surely is that people become active in schools because they are concerned about the education their children will receive. In the next chapter we will examine how and why school participants got started, but we may note here that indeed all but two of the participants in our study were indeed parents. Moreover, they had large families. Less than four percent had only one child; nearly one-third had four children or more.

A second assumption commonly shared is that most school participants are women. It is mothers who are particularly likely to provide supportive services within the school since they are more likely than the father to have free time during the day. It is the mothers, moreover, whom cultural stereotypes have assigned to be primarily responsible for active parentage, looking after the nurturing needs of the children while the father earns a living. An NORC survey in 1967 found that 69.5 percent of the members of school organizations were women. Among the St. Louis respondents the percentage of women was 71.6. Thus it appears that the stereotype is substantially valid. The great increase in the number of working mothers has eroded at least part of the traditional expectation, however. One-fourth of the women participants were working wives, not housewives. Among the officers of school organizations, the proportion who are women drops considerably. We will consider this further in Chapter 7. Here we should emphasize that while school participation is still a predominantly female mode men are by no means excluded from playing a significant part.

The age profile of St. Louis participants is somewhat different from the national sample of school organization members, though comparisons are made a little uncertain because of the somewhat broader definition of school-related participation used in the NORC study. The St. Louis respondents were all engaged in school-centered behavior and not merely affiliation which might or might not entail any actual behavior. As Table 3-1 shows, school participants generally include fewer young adults and fewer senior citizens than are found in the population as a whole. The St. Louis set reflects this also but more so. Very young adults, of course, are unlikely to have children old enough for school, which probably

Table 3-1

Age of School Participants

Age	NORC U.S. Population	NORC-School Organization Members	St. Louis School Activities
30 and Under	28.0%	20.8%	12.2%
31-35	9.4	16.2	24.3
36-40	9.2	19.3	23.7
41-50	15.6	23.6	31.6
Over 50	37.3	19.3	7.9
Missing	.4	.8	.4

accounts for the smaller proportion under 30. What is more significant, however, is the relatively small number over 50. This points to the essentially temporary character of most school involvement. The participation of a given individual may persist for several years, but most will eventually leave the school arena. They may remain nominal members of school groups for some time after they have ceased being active, which may account for the much larger number in this age group of the NORC study. But generally we expect people to leave the school arena well before they stop citizen activity generally. When they leave and where they go is analyzed in a later chapter.

A third common assumption is that school participation, like participation in virtually all other institutional arenas, is a predominantly middle class activity. It is contended that poor people often lack the time to get involved. Being without experience they lack the skills involved in participating in meetings and on committees and lack also the self-confidence to assert themselves. They are less likely to interact with participants and so the noninvolvement is reinforced. The argument applies to all forms of voluntary action, but it is especially relevant to schools because in addition to these considerations the poor are thought to have a less intense interest in and concern for their children's education.

What the mix of factors may be cannot be sorted out here, but the general validity of the assumption that school participation is mainly reserved to the middle class seems undeniable. Table 3-2 summarizes the data from the 1967 NORC survey and the St. Louis area study. The difference between participants and the public at large is striking, and the St. Louis group, which was entirely drawn from outside the core city,

Table 3-2

Class Status of School Participants

	NORC-U.S. Population	NORC-School Organization Members	St. Louis Participants
Education			
Less than 12th grade	34.6%	14.7%	6.2%
12th grade	33.3	35.9	34.7
College	25.9	34.7	42.8
Post-Graduate	6.3	14.7	16.4
Income			
Under $5000	19.0	8.1	.8
$5000-$9999	21.6	15.4	3.4
$10,000-$14,999	22.0	23.6	20.5
$15,000-$19,999	14.2	21.6	25.2
$20,000-$24,999	6.9	12.0	18.5
$25,000+	7.7	13.1	28.6
Missing	8.6	6.2	3.2
Occupation--Head of Household			
Professional/Technical	23.7	37.8	35.7
Business/Managerial	12.6	12.7	29.6
Clerical/Sales	18.9	24.7	7.9
Craftsmen/Operatives	30.0	13.2	19.3
Service Workers	12.9	10.8	3.0
Other	2.0	.8	3.6

displays an especially strong middle class character. Almost no poor people are included. Only three respondents had not attended high school. And even where the head of the household was working class it was usually (84.7% of the time) the wife who actually participated.

In the preceding chapter we indicated something of the social diversity in our six communities. Part of this diversity is class-based, and Table 3-3 presents the data on income and education level by community. Many

Table 3-3

Income and Education by Community

	Edwards-ville	Granite City	Kirk-wood	Ladue	Nor-mandy	St. Charles
Income						
Less than $15,000	29.5%	37.1%	9.9%	4.5%	39.5%	32.2%
$15-25,000	43.2	35.3	43.7	27.6	48.7	53.3
More than $25,000	26.1	16.3	42.5	64.4	6.6	14.5
Missing	5.7	1.2	3.7	3.4	5.3	---
Education						
12th grade or less	42.0%	70.9%	16.2%	10.3%	44.7%	57.8%
Some college	33.0	23.3	52.6	72.5	44.8	32.2
Post-graduate study	24.9	5.8	32.2	17.2	10.5	10.0

of the elements we noted in describing the individual communities are reflected in the class status of the school activists in those communities. Ladue participants are wealthy, but those in Kirkwood and even in Edwardsville, partially a college town, are better educated. On the low side Normandy is the poorest group but outranks both Granite City and St. Charles in educational level.

In our original design we selected communities for study in part on the basis of their ethnic and racial composition. Kirkwood and Normandy have substantial black school populations, while the Ladue and Edwardsville districts include smaller black enclaves. We were unable to complete as many interviews with black participants as we had hoped, but a total of thirty-seven (7.3%) of our respondents were non-white. This group differs from the rest hardly at all, however, on any demographic or even attitudinal variables so in the remainder of our analysis we have not separated them out for special attention.

Religious affiliation may be expected to display a somewhat distinctive pattern among participants in public school activities since a substantial share of the Catholic population will be concerned about parochial schools instead. Although there are fewer Catholics among our respondents than in the national sample of school participants (17.8% versus 26.6%), the proportion is amply large enough to assess the significance, if any, of Catholic affiliation on what school activists think and do. We also can identify any patterns associated with Jewish identification since 7.7 percent of our respondents, mostly from Ladue, are Jewish.

Among the Protestants there are sizable contingents of Methodists (15.2%), Presbyterians (15%) and Baptists (12.4%). The Presbyterians are rather concentrated in Kirkwood, but neither they nor the other Protestant groupings display any very distinctive patterns of attitudes or behaviors. One fact that does provide an important indication of the overall character of the school participants under scrutiny is that 62.3 percent say they go to church regularly and an additional 19.1 percent say they attend sometimes.

In family structures the St. Louis school activists are not very representative of what are alleged to be the modern social trends. We have already noted the comparatively large families. To this may be added the fact that 96.8 percent are married! (In 1970 only 72 percent of the U.S. population over 25 was married.) Only seven respondents (1.4%) were separated or divorced at the time of the interview. (One person had never married but was hoping to some day and was taking part in school affairs in anticipation of that time.) The national data on school organization members also shows a higher percentage who are married and fewer who are divorced than is true for the population as a whole. It appears, therefore, that not only is parenthood a prerequisite for school participation; a stable family structure also contributes. This is further reflected in the type of living situation Ninety-four percent of our respondents--all outside the central city, to be sure--own their own home!

Organizational Participation

We asked a variety of questions designed to discover the extent to which school participants also were active in other kinds of organizations in their communities. From these responses we have constructed an organizational involvement index based upon a combination of formal memberships, active memberships, and organizational offices. Table 3-4 shows the distribution of index scores by community. Quite clearly, organizational participation reflects the class composition of the community, the higher the status the more involved.

Another kind of activity was also explored, this having to do with personal actions outside of an organizational context. We asked about writing to officials or newspapers, going to see them about some issue,

Table 3-4

Organizational Involvement by Community

Organizational Involvement	Edwards-ville	Granite City	Kirk-wood	Ladue	Nor-mandy	St. Chas.	Total
Low	21.6%	27.9%	7.5%	13.8%	39.5%	26.7%	22.7%
Low-Medium	30.7	41.9	23.7	24.1	18.4	25.6	27.6
Medium-High	18.2	11.5	26.2	16.1	27.6	25.6	20.7
High	29.5	18.6	42.5	46.0	14.5	22.1	29.0

and the frequency with which they discussed public affairs. Again, an index was constructed, and the scores by community are presented in Table 3-5. Again, there is a discernible class effect but it is much weaker

Table 3-5

Personal Activity by Community

Personal Activity	Edwards-ville	Granite City	Kirk-wood	Ladue	Nor-mandy	St. Chas.	Total
Low	18.2%	11.6%	11.2%	21.8%	17.1%	15.6%	16.0%
Low-Medium	26.1	27.9	17.5	25.3	30.3	26.7	25.6
Medium-High	31.8	29.1	28.7	21.8	27.6	32.2	28.6
High	23.9	31.4	42.5	31.0	25.0	25.6	29.8

than with regard to organizational involvement. The additional factor of importance is most evident in Kirkwood where the school activists are also very active on other fronts as well. On the basis of this evidence a good case can be made that Kirkwood is simply a more strongly participatory community than the rest.

One other dimension of individual orientation toward the community was investigated, this one dealing not with activity but with attentiveness.

The attentiveness index was constructed on the basis of answers to questions about the newspapers and news magazines read, television news programs watched, frequency of public affairs discussion, and level of interest in politics. Table 3-6 displays the results for the six communities.

Table 3-6

Attentiveness to Public Affairs by Community

Level of Attentiveness	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Chas.	Total
Low	18.2%	19.8%	5.0%	13.8%	18.4%	20.0%	16.0%
Low-Medium	29.5	27.9	21.2	24.1	26.3	41.1	28.6
Medium-High	26.1	38.4	40.0	29.9	36.8	24.4	32.3
High	26.1	14.0	33.7	32.2	18.4	14.4	23.1

Again, the class factor is evident, but Kirkwood is, predictably, a bit higher and St. Charles lower than SES alone would lead us to expect.

Let us repeat the point that these indexes do not necessarily reflect the patterns that would be found in the communities as a whole. Only school activists are included. Moreover, we have no basis for judging whether a particular index score is low or high in any world beyond that of school participants in these six districts. How they would compare with other people in other places we do not know, though the level of organizational involvement is much higher than the national norm. The NORC study found 74.5 percent to be members of one voluntary association, 48.8 percent in two, and 29.9 percent in three or more. Our respondents include 94.3 percent who belong to at least one group, 81.1 percent in two, and 64.1 percent in three or more.

Geographic and Social Mobility

Our respondents are not particularly mobile. We lack comparable baseline data so we do not know whether other Americans of similar class position and similar age and family circumstances would be such locals. Some 74 percent said they had never lived outside the immediate St. Louis area, and another 7 percent were from outstate Illinois or Missouri. Only 12 percent had lived as many as two different places outside St. Louis. Clearly, our respondents can be expected to judge their schools and their communities from perspectives that are shaped primarily by local experience and standards. Whether a broader frame of reference would produce a different evaluation we cannot say. Our data do not display much difference between old residents and more transient participants in their evaluation of the schools. We do know, however, that these school participants are deeply rooted in the St. Louis area as well as in stable structures of family and church.

Is geographic mobility in fact related to the amount and significance of school participation? One might reason that, at least among the middle class, newcomers would become involved disproportionately in order to make up for their comparative lack of familiarity with the local scene. In fact, however, we find that to some extent it is the longer term residents who are more active, and it is upon them that participation has the greatest impact. The relationship is not perfectly linear but appears most strongly at the low and high ends of the group. Our question about the number of residences yielded, as we have seen, a very small number who had moved around a good deal, so we have difficulty assessing the effect of high geographic mobility. What we can see, however, suggests that there is simply no association between high mobility and either attitudes toward the schools or activity relating to them. The weight of our evidence is less heavy than we might like but it does support the view that rootedness in the community facilitates school participation and enhances its impact.

We might observe, in passing, that mobility does not seem to have much to do with evaluation of the schools either. There is only one slight, perhaps misleading, but rather intriguing movement in the data. We asked whether the schools are getting better, staying the same, or getting worse. A greater number of those who have lived in the community the longest think the schools are getting better; and also a greater percentage of the old-timers think the schools are worse! The difference is one of community. It is in Normandy and Kirkwood that the old residents are more pessimistic. Surely the substantial racial change in Normandy and the race-related controversy over reorganization in Kirkwood have provoked much of this unhappiness.

Social mobility is a different matter. We compared the occupation of the respondent (or head of household) with that of the respondent's father and coded for movement up or down the commonly accepted prestige ranking of occupations. We find that 37.7 percent of the respondents are upward mobiles, 5.9 percent are downward mobiles. These two groups are distributed remarkedly equally among the six communities, as Table 3-7 shows. It is the socially stable groups whose distribution shapes the class character of the communities, high status in one, low in another.

Who are the socially mobile participants? They are much more likely to be found among the men than the women, and this may suggest another aspect of the sex role stereotypes we mentioned earlier. If women activists are socially more stable it may imply that school involvement is

Table 3-7

Social Mobility by Community

Social Mobility	Edwards-ville	Granite City	Kirk-wood	Ladue	Nor-mandy	St. Chas.	Total
Upward	38.6%	37.2%	46.2%	31.0%	35.5%	37.8%	37.7%
Stable High	22.7	7.0	40.0	52.9	19.7	18.9	26.8
Stable Low	29.5	48.8	7.5	6.9	38.2	35.6	27.8
Downward	6.8	5.8	5.0	8.0	3.9	5.6	5.9
NA	2.4	1.2	1.3	1.2	2.7	2.1	1.8

more "natural" for women, more fully a part of their role expectations, whereas men becoming involved in school affairs has somewhat special significance. It may accompany and even assist one's ascent up the social ladder. Another distinction of interest is that the upward mobiles are a bit more conservative on both economic issues and social questions than are people who are of high stable status. The low stables tend to be liberal on the economic issues and conservative on the social issues, a finding which fits the conception of the working class, "hard-hat, bread-and-butter" liberal.

In most other respects there is not any dramatic effect attributable to social mobility. Where class considerations play a part, as in organizational involvement, generally, or school activity, in particular , the upwardly mobile respondents stand between the stable high status set and the low status set. In effect, they seem to be moving from the one level to the other but have not yet fully reached the new attitudinal plateau commensurate with their new class position. But, although this pattern of differences is repeated in several situations, the magnitude of the differences is modest.

And there is no significant difference at all in the attitudes held toward the schools or their various components. Class position generally does not predict evaluative perspective; participatory involvement does, as we will see in several later parts of this study. Shifts in class position likewise do not lead to differences in attitude concerning the schools.

Political Profiles

School participation need not be related in any specific way to involvement in partisan politics or, for that matter, to attitudes about political and social questions of the day. Republican and Democratic parents might equally be expected to work with the PTA. Nevertheless, we are interested in how our school respondents are oriented toward political parties for two major reasons. First, we want to know in fact how close an association there may be. Are school activists also inclined to be party activists, or are they a differentiated set? So much of the study of participation has focused on partisan participation, and we need to determine whether that literature has application to our respondents. Second, are partisan political beliefs associated with beliefs or behaviors respecting school affairs? We know that at the national level and for most people, political ideas lack structure and coherence, though less so now than two decades ago.[1] Yet among activists, opinions have always had more shape to them. Can school activists be meaningfully grouped into well-defined ideological categories, liberal or conservative, for instance? And, if so, do these perspectives shape their attitudes or behavior regarding the schools?

We may begin by considering the matter of party identification, for here we do know what the national patterns are like. Table 3-8 shows

Table 3-8

Party Identification

	St. Louis School	Nation, 1972
Strong Democrat	16.2%	15%
Weak Democrat	18.1	25
Ind. Democrat	15.8	11
Independent	12.02	13
Ind. Republican	11.02	10
Weak Republican	16.2	13
Strong Republican	10.1	10
Apolitical	.6	--
Other	--	3

that the St. Louis group is marginally less Democratic than the nation as a whole but the differences are not of great importance. There are some paradoxical differences between attitudes toward political partisanship, on the one hand, and partisan activities, on the other. Half the sample agreed with the statement that political parties were really just interested in winning votes, not in the opinions of the voters. Only one-third said that they "cared a good deal" about the outcomes of partisan elections (compared to 60% in the 1972 SRC nationwide survey).

In contrast to these rather anti-partisan views, however, only one-fourth were willing to say that it might be better if we could get rid of party conflict altogether, which is far less than the 57 percent Dennis found to hold the view in his 1966 Wisconsin sample.[2] Even more striking are the evidences of partisan participation. Table 3-9 compares the proportions of our respondents who report engaging in various kinds of

Table 3-9

Frequency of Partisan Campaign Participation

	U.S.-SRC (1968)	U.S.-Verba-Nie (1967)	St. Louis
Vote in Presidential Campaign	—	Regularly 72%	All 82.12% Most 14.4
Vote in Local Elections	—	Always 47	Always 47.3 Most 42.8
Work for Party or Candidate	6%	26	39.3
Wear Campaign Button or sticker on car	15	—	45.8
Tried to persuade others to vote as you do	33	28	62.5
Give money	8	13	44.4

partisan campaign activity with the figures reported by Verba and Nie and by the Survey Research Center. The SRC percentages are lower, in large part, presumably, because they were asked with reference to the specific election campaign of that year only, whereas the Verba-Nie and St. Louis surveys asked respondents to look back over the last several years. In any case, it is clear that the St. Louis group was far more active in partisan affairs than the national average. This might have been anticipated in a group that was, after all, selected precisely because of its activism in the school arena. It can be argued that activists in one issue area cum institutional arena would tend also to be active in another.

This interpretation is brought up short, however, by the self-assessments of our respondents. Only 5.5 percent regarded themselves as very active in partisan politics and only an additional 19.7 percent were willing to say they were even moderately active. So that despite the very high rates of active campaign participation among these school activists, they overwhelmingly tend to see themselves as largely outside the arena of partisan elections. And, to return to the question of how much they care about partisan outcomes, the low rate of affirmative answers there indicates considerable psychological distance from the partisan arena as well. We cannot altogether account for why, in view of what we have just said, the activity scores are so high. Perhaps it is simply an extension of activism from the schools to partisan campaigns without the attitudinal accompaniment of a heightened sense of involvement we ordinarily assume will follow. Perhaps in giving their answers our respondents did not always distinguish strictly partisan election involvement from non-partisan school campaign involvement and inflated their total participation rates by including school activities. What is clear is that they displayed a substantial tendency to separate themselves, almost disdainfully, from the partisan electoral arena in their attitudes and self-image.

Are school participants liberal, conservative or in any meaningful way ideologues? We might expect that they might be distributed ideologically about like the remainder of the population. But the research on issue attitudes suggests that a large segment of the public holds vague and often contradictory views on public policy questions. Those who are more active politically, on the other hand, display somewhat greater structure and coherence in their ideas,[3] and we might expect therefore to observe at least a moderate amount of identifiable ideological orientation among our respondents. We did not attempt to assess very thoroughly the structuredness of issue orientations. We did seek, however, to tap stances on some of the major issues. We have selected two for particular analysis. One deals with income distribution: "Do you think the difference between the income of the rich and the poor in this country is much too great, somewhat too great, or is it as it should be?" The point of the question was to discriminate between socio-economic liberals and conservatives.

A second question that will be focus of our concern here dealt with what is often referred to as a "style" issue, women's liberation. We asked:

> Which of these two statements do you agree with most?
>
> a) By nature women are happiest when they are making a home and caring for children.
>
> b) Our society, not nature, teaches women to prefer homemaking to work outside the house.

The responses to the two questions and comparable data are listed in Table 3-10.

Table 3-10

Issue Orientations, Economic and Social

	Income Difference			Women's Liberation	
	St. Louis	U.S.-1967		St. Louis	U.S.-1972
Much too great	42.6%	26.0%	Nature	37.7%	53.9%
Somewhat too great	24.9	33.7	Society	54.2	41.8
About right	30.4	32.9	Refuse to choose	7.7	—
DK, NA	2.2	7.4	DK, NA	.4	4.3

It seems fair to say that compared to the nation as a whole the school respondents were preponderantly on the liberal side on both questions, but it is also true that individual respondents were scattered badly. Style liberals and economic liberals were very often not the same people at all, as is indicated by the lack of relationship in Table 3-11. (The Don't

Table 3-11

Relationships Between Social and Economic Issue Orientations

	Income Differences		
Women's Liberation	Much Too Great	Somewhat Too Great	About Right
Nature	39.4%	31.0%	42.9%
Society	56.9	61.1	44.8

Knows and Refuse to Choose subsets have been eliminated for purposes of clarity.) What we wish to do, therefore, is to probe a bit the correlates of attitude variation, not so much in an effort to establish some causal chains as to observe whatever associations there might be between patterns of school participation and broader social attitudes.

First, there are quite substantial community variations. Table 3-12 makes it clear that Granite City and Kirkwood are mirror images, liberal in one sphere and conservative in the other. And the other communities

Table 3-12

Issue Orientations by Community

	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles
Percent indicating Nature Dictates Women's Role	33.0%	54.7%	20.0%	27.6%	44.7%	45.6%
Percent indicating Income Distribution is as it Should Be	18.2	26.7	51.2	33.2	25.0	30.0

with comparatively large working class populations also follow the Granite City pattern. But Ladue, with a significant number of liberal Democrats, mainly Jewish, does not move with Kirkwood on the income distribution question. It remains relatively more liberal. Income and education are both associated with views on these questions as one would expect, positively with the "Society" view of women's liberation and negatively with the belief that income differences are too large. Income bears the stronger relationship to the response on income difference, while education is more strongly related to women's lib views; again, as one might expect.

How are the attitude variables related to school participation and evaluation items? The answer is: not very much. There are only the weakest connections with the amount of school activism. Neither is there much association with the impact that participation has had on the individual. On the other hand, there is a considerable difference in how social liberals and economic liberals are oriented toward the community. The former are more attentive to public affairs, for example, and more likely to undertake such personal actions as letter writing or other forms of personal contacting. The social liberals are more positive in their evaluations of the world, whether it is the younger generations or government officials. But they do not become more involved in organizations, whether school related or not, and this is the critical point for our analysis. When it comes to active participation there is very little difference among people of differing issue positions or ideological perspectives.

Conclusion

We have reviewed a variety of factors that are (or are not) associated with active school participation. Implicit in this discussion is the notion that these factors in some sense "cause" the participation, and it may be useful in conclusion to address this question. We have found that school activists are quite deeply rooted in their communities. Are we entitled to say that "rootedness" causes participation? Are we warranted in inferring that high SES, especially high educational attainment, leads to participation? Does being a mother generate PTA membership, almost like an additional hormonal secretion? As we have put the questions, they must be answered in the negative. Not all deeply rooted citizens participate. Nor do all highly educated people. Many mothers avoid PTA service. None of these factors is a sufficient condition for school participation.

Are they necessary conditions? Again, the strict answers must be negative. There are active men; active newcomers, even some who are unchurched; active people of modest class status. Instead of assigning causal force to these descriptive characteristics we may more properly think of them as predisposing factors. Women with children, citizens with strong community ties, people of upper social strata; all these groupings will be more likely to spawn school activists than groupings lacking these characteristics. Individuals possessing several of the predisposing items may especially be drawn into active participation. What the odds are we cannot say. We have no control groups of non-participants to provide baselines for such estimates.

We can say, however, that these predispositions will not operate without the presence of some additional elements. We may think of these as precipitating factors or, in some instances, more explicit recruitment mechanisms. In any case, we must give them explicit attention. Our general understanding is that these factors work upon, or interact with, the array of predispositions to bring about the resulting patterns of citizen participation. Having looked at some of the predisposing characteristics, we turn now to the precipitating factors.

CHAPTER 3—FOOTNOTES

1. The controversy over the extent to which voters possess coherent intellectual frameworks to view and interpret politics continues unabated. The initial statement, of course, was Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller and Donald Stokes, The American Voter. New York: John Wiley, 1960. See also Philip Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in David E. Apter, ed., Ideology and Discontent, New York: The Free Press, 1964; McClosky, *op. cit.*, Bennett, *op. cit.*, and much more.

2. Jack Dennis, "Support for the Institution of Elections by the Mass Public," American Political Science Review, vol. 64 (Sept., 1970), pp. 819-836.

3. See, especially, McClosky, *op. cit.*

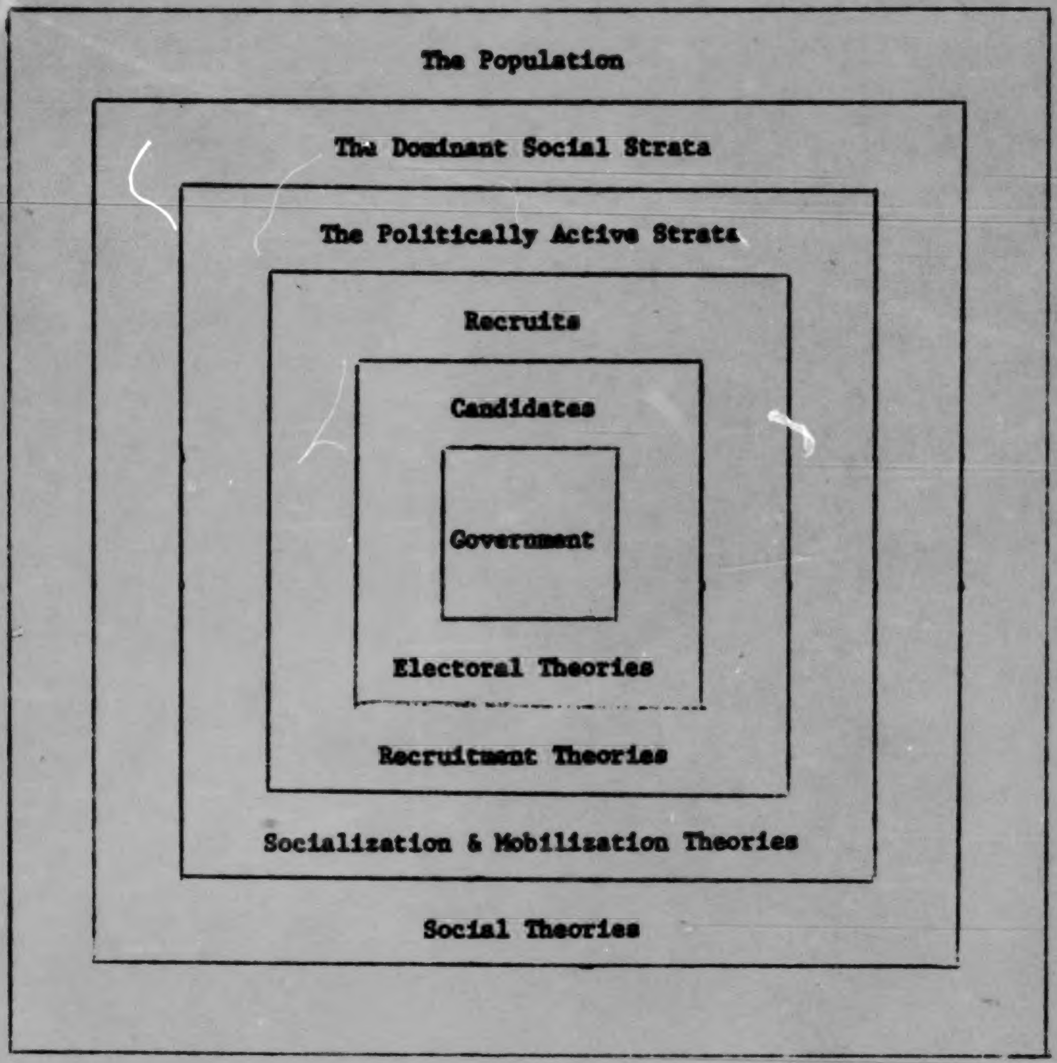
CHAPTER 4

Getting Started

In recent years social scientists have begun to pay considerable attention to the processes by which people become involved. Studies have been undertaken of school board members, U.S. Senators, city councilmen, legislative candidates, political party workers and other groups of political elites to determine what factors and forces were at work to propel, encourage or facilitate the individual's entry into an active political role.[1] For purposes of political analysis the study of recruitment and mobilization offers important evidence regarding the explanation of how it is that some people rule over others. From the perspective of practical wisdom such investigation is also important, for it may tell us much about how to build effective organizational support for a cause or a program. The argument is simply this: the kinds of people who become active and the kinds of activities they engage in may depend in important part on how and why they get started.

Prewitt's Chinese Box Puzzle offers a useful metaphor for thinking about this process. As one moves further and further toward the center of Figure 1, an ever narrower segment of the population is included and the political roles have ever more significance and power. Moreover, Prewitt's puzzle diagram indicates that quite distinct kinds of theories are involved as we move from one phase to the next. Thus, he suggests, social theories predict only that certain social strata have differential advantages in the competition for power. They do not permit one to distinguish between the middle class activist and the middle class non-voter. They say only that there will be more of the former than the latter

Figure 4-1


The Population
The Dominant Social Strata
The Politically Active Strata
Recruits
Candidates
Government
Electoral Theories
Recruitment Theories
Socialization & Mobilization Theories
Social Theories

relative to the working class.

In dealing with our data on school participation the first question is where, in the Prewitt scheme of things, do school activists fall. They constitute, clearly, a set of politically active people, and hence we are led to focus on how they were mobilized. Mobilization is a complicated concept. It implies an external force acting specifically upon the individual to bring about a particular behavior that would not otherwise occur. And this is also what is meant by recruitment. The difference, if there is one, has to do with the roles into which the mobilization/recruitment takes place. Mobilization implies rather vaguely defined roles, active but poorly bounded. Those who are mobilized for a protest march exemplify the point. Recruitment implies specific roles, such as those of legislator or Cabinet officer, which are clearly differentiated both as to authority and the process of entry. Mobilization may also imply a larger number of mobilizees, but this is, perhaps, a secondary consideration. School participants occupy rather weakly defined roles except when they become officers of school organizations or candidates for the school board. Consequently, our main attention here will be devoted to an analysis of the mobilization process.

Some people are more susceptible to a particular mobilization campaign than are others. As we argued in the previous chapter, this susceptibility is partly a function of predispositions toward support which grow out of certain social characteristics. In part, however, we would expect that the process involved is one of socialization whereby people in certain social situations are more likely to learn norms conducive to participation while others do not. Thus, a concern with mobilization implies attention as well to socialization.

Our data do not permit a full exploration of these processes, but they do furnish material bearing on three major questions. First, we ask what kind of impact family background may have had on the respondent's active involvement in the schools. This involves us most directly in the question of socialization, though it certainly does not exhaust the possible ways that early socialization might work to predispose people toward or away from participation. The second component of our analysis deals with more specific mobilization factors and processes. Broadly speaking, we may think of three sources of mobilization of school activists. One we may call "natural." Presumably it grows out of earlier socialization. We mean by it the situation where a parent, whose child is entering school, simply assumes that participation in the PTA is the "natural" thing to do and requires no further stimulus to become active. Another mobilization source is more explicit and may generally be headed "Contacting." Here a friend, a neighbor, a teacher acting directly or through the children, or some other person directly asks the person to come to a meeting and become active. The third source, like the first, operates without the intervention of specific people and, consequently, in the language of recruitment studies, presents participants as self-starters. The mobilizing trigger, however, is an issue or event that arouses the individual's attention and leads, then, to his or her decision to become active.

Our third concern deals with the respondent's sense of duty to participate. Here we want to know how strong this feeling is among our activists, whether it is focused especially on schools or is generalized, and to what extent it seems to follow from the specific family socialization process or to be otherwise derived. Does a sense of participatory duty serve to enhance involvement, as is often suggested in voting behavior research? Does it mediate between family background and activity or attitude formation? Does it matter which?

This formulation differs in important ways from existing literature on recruitment. That work all focuses upon recruitment to decision-making roles, to office, rather than to the prior status of participant. On the other hand, the participation literature gives very little attention to socialization, with one or two exceptions.[2] Our concern with how participants are recruited falls between these two bodies of work. Hence, we have developed a somewhat different approach.

In all of the analysis that follows we will look at the data in the aggregate for whatever relationships we can discern, but we will also consider our six communities separately to see whether the relationships observed will continue to hold in particular community contexts.

The Impact of Family Background

We asked three questions about the nature of our respondents' family orientation toward participation. One dealt with the extent to which the family was active in community affairs. Secondly, we asked about the family's interest in school matters. Table 4-1 presents the distributions on these two questions. Not surprisingly, the level of interest in school affairs is somewhat higher. Any attempt to relate these data to the attitudes and behaviors of our respondents, however, would require an inferential leap since we would have to assume that the parents had, in

Table 4-1

Family Participation and Interest

	Family Activity in Community Affairs	Family Interest in School Matters
Very Active	20.1	40.0
Moderately	28.8	35.9
Not Very	26.8	14.6
Not at All	24.3	9.5

fact, provided some kind of role model, positive or negative, for their children and that the presence of these models accounted for the observed pattern of activity in the latter group. We have some direct data on the point. We asked whether the respondent's family had, in fact, had an impact upon their own school participation. Some 50.5 percent said yes. Of this group, in turn, however, 19.8 percent said the impact was negative; it was the bad example of their parents that encouraged their participation.

The responses to all three questions were highly interrelated, so in the discussion that follows we will concentrate mainly on the direct family impact question and see what seems to be associated with it. A substantial fraction of our respondents had reasonably participatory and attentive parents while others of our group did not. What we want to know is whether there are interesting patterns in the distribution of the level of parental involvement, and, of even greater interest, whether this variable makes an appreciable difference in the way our respondents think and act.

Family impact is substantially greater for women than for men. On the other hand, almost one-fourth of the women who felt their family had affected their involvement with the schools regarded the impact as negative. Nevertheless, there is more positive impact among women than among men, and the finding that women are much more likely to come to activism because of their family situation, past and present, is certainly of broad importance.

The effect of class upon family impact is, in our data, entangled with the effect of sex. If we use the respondent's education as the indicator of class, we find that there is a relationship between positive family impact and educational level for both men and women, but it is stronger for women. Conversely, it is the least well-educated women who report a negative parental effect. This effect stems in part from parents who themselves were of lower socio-economic status while the positive impact comes mainly from higher status families. In any case, however, women are more susceptible to the effects of the parental role model than are men.

Table 4-2

Education, Sex and Family Impact

Educational Level	Negative Impact		No Impact		Positive Impact	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
12	3.7	18.6	81.5	53.1	14.8	28.2
16	3.8	7.9	56.6	35.4	39.6	56.7
17	-	-	68.8	40.0	31.3	60.0

It is not surprising that the family-generated impulse to take part in school affairs should be stronger among those who are now members of the middle class. We find also that this effect is stronger among those respondents, men and women, whose families were also of middle class status than among those who have been upwardly mobile. What is rather unexpected, however, is that there seem to be few behavioral or attitudinal consequences of having perceived this parental encouragement. For example, there is no relationship between family impact and level of school activity. There is a modest negative association between family impact and impact of school participation, as might be expected, but the effect is too small to warrant much interpretation.

Further investigation does reveal some differences of importance, however. The differences are mainly between those who report family impact and those who do not. The latter are more negative in their evaluation of the schools, more inclined to think the schools have gotten worse, and less likely to have had their opinions changed by their participatory experience. Moreover, they are less likely to think that school participation makes much difference. In short, while by no means hostile to the schools, the no-family-impact group is significantly less enthusiastic about either participation or the schools themselves. And this is true despite the fact that there is no differences among the groups in either the overall amount of activity or the specific kinds of activity undertaken. It seems that the main effect of family background, then, is mildly to predispose people, especially women, toward participation and toward a generally positive evaluation of the schools. But clearly there are other and more compelling factors at work in shaping specific behavior.

To probe the puzzle further we turn to the recruitment mechanisms by which participants were brought into school activity. Proper development of this recruitment data requires us to pause for a moment while that part of the overall study design is set forth. Meanwhile, however, we must keep the family impact variable within our ken.

Recuitment/Mobilization

As we indicated earlier, it is not enough to identify the correlates of participation in order to explain the particular processes by which it came about. We need to discover the specific triggers that start the citizen on the path of active involvement. These triggers may involve explicit agents or they may consist of mechanisms that have been internalized in the individual and respond when particular kinds of stimuli appear.

In our study we asked people first an open-ended question: What got you started? We then probed with regard to what we expected to be the principal kinds of triggers to school participation: issues, events, contacting by other persons, one's children acting either as contacters or as generalized stimuli to participation, and a broad sense of duty. As we shall see in the next section of this chapter, the sense of duty, though it was the most pervasive, turned out to be the least helpful in explaining how and why people had become active.

The responses to the open-ended question could be grouped into four reasonably coherent sets. Already, however, our basic concerns were made more difficult because people interpreted the question in quite diverse ways. Thus some identified "outside" forces as triggering or mobilizing mechanisms, while others talked in terms of their interest in helping their children or their desire to know what was happening. These people, as we noted earlier, may be thought of as self-starters but it is not immediately apparent what to expect of them once they start. For example, should we anticipate as strong a commitment from them as we would from people who began their involvement as a result of their concern about a school issue? Probably not. On the other hand, if the participation itself is the crucial element in determining how much lasting effect there will be, it may be that the starting mechanism makes little difference.

We shall probe several such questions. To begin, however, let us look at the basic distribution of responses in Table 4-3. We have grouped them into four broad categories, and the child-centered group is much the largest. There are some important differences among these groups. Most of these can more effectively be considered in relation to an additional series of specific probe questions. We can note two significant patterns, however. First, in general, those who indicated they had begun as a result of some issue or event were generally of higher status and went on to engage in more intense school activity. Moreover, this group was more active elsewhere in the community as well and more attentive to public affairs. The other groups displayed less clearly defined patterns.

Table 4-3

What Got You Started?--I

Desire to Know	11.6%
Concern for Child	54.1
Contacted by Others	17.6
Issue or Event	8.8
Miscellaneous, NA	7.9

If we examine this question in relation to the specific community involved, we find considerable variation. In Kirkwood, for instance, the bulk of the participants pointed to a children-centered explanation for their initial involvement, while in Normandy there was considerably more contacting reported, much of it done by the schools themselves. Interpretation is confounded by the fact that in response to the probes the Normandy pattern held up but Kirkwood did not. We will turn to the probes, therefore, and attempt a reconciliation of these conflicting responses.

We put five probe questions to our respondents, asking whether some issue had prompted them to become active, whether some event had brought them out to meetings, whether any particular person had asked them to get involved, whether they felt some sort of duty to get involved, and whether children had played any special role in getting them to become active.

The distribution of responses to these five questions is presented in Table 4-4. Compared to Table 4-3 above we find that the issues and events categories are more often identified, as is the contacting process, while the child-centered explanation recedes. The relationships among the two sets of responses can be seen in Table 4-5. There is a reasonable relation-

Table 4-4

What Got You Started?--II

Issues	14.6%
Events	18.4
Contacting	31.7
Duty	70.1
Children	35.8

(Percentages sum to more than 100 as multiple responses are permitted.)

Table 4-5

What Got You Started?--III

	Probes				
In % Answering Yes	Issues	Events	Contact	Duty	Children
Open-Ended Responses					
Issues & Events	27.4%	12.0%	8.3%	10.0%	6.3%
Contact	8.2	19.5	38.8	16.6	16.4
Desire to Know	1.4	5.4	7.6	8.0	8.6
Concern for Child	54.8	56.5	37.6	57.1	59.2
Other, NA	8.2	6.6	7.7	8.3	9.5

ship between the issue probe and the issues/events response. That it is not stronger may partly reflect the ambiguity contained in the notion of "event." For some respondents events meant a happening of substantive significance to the schools such as a school board election contest or the eruption of a controversy over school policy. For others, perhaps most, an event was an occasion such as a school gymnastics program or a money-raising fair that drew them into participation.

The contacting categories are appropriately interrelated also, and we conclude that contacting—"somebody asked me"—is the least ambiguous recruitment mechanism in operation. People know and remember reasonably well when an interpersonal contact has effected their participation. The child-centered mechanisms, on the other hand, are highly ambiguous. Those who cited concern for their children as the precipitating factor leading to activity were about as likely to pick issues or events, when pressed, as they were to attribute their involvement to the children. Parental obligation, while providing a broadly supportive base for participation, often does not constitute a compelling specific impetus.

A comparison of the six communities reveals some striking differences. Generalized child-centered concerns give way massively in Kirkwood where issues were especially salient. By way of contrast, contacting was more important in Normandy. This fits our understanding of the two districts. Kirkwood, where reorganization and racial balance were overt concerns, had issues while Ladue, say, did not. Normandy was (and is) so fragmented a community that contacting, much of it by school officials, was of more significance. Note that St. Charles displayed rather substantial amounts of contacting also. This might be the result of Superintendent Colaw's mobilization strategy. Or it might simply be the natural product of rapid

Table 4-6

What Got You Started?--IV--Percent Answering Yes

	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles
Issue/Event (Open-End)	12.5	5.8	12.8	4.6	2.6	13.3
Issue (Probe)	19.3	15.1	27.5	6.9	10.5	7.8
Contact (Open-End)	11.3	17.5	1.2	14.9	34.2	26.7
Contact (Probe)	32.1	20.0	26.3	25.3	57.6	36.1
To Know (Open-End)	5.7	11.6	1.2	17.2	15.8	16.7
Duty (Probe)	79.5	59.6	83.7	41.4	77.6	80.9
Child-Centered (Open-End)	63.7	50.0	82.5	43.6	46.1	30.0
Child-Centered (Probe)	44.3	51.2	16.2	35.6	35.5	27.8

growth and the resulting absence of established community ties. Note also the remarkably low sense of duty in Ladue. Indeed, Ladue reported the lowest number of responses of any kind, implying apparently that in that wealthy community there was simply a weaker sense of understanding of how participation had begun and, perhaps, why it was continuing.

We can go a step further in our community analysis and ask how the several trigger mechanisms relate to one another. We find, for instance, that in Normandy there is a strong relationship between issue concern and concern for children (G = .89) while elsewhere that relationship was not significant. On the other hand, in Kirkwood, and there only, there was a substantial relationship between issues and contacting (G = .41). What happened in Kirkwood is that when an issue developed someone called up to mobilize participation. In Normandy, on the other hand, while there was much contacting done it was not related to issues. The sense of issues there tended to grow out of parental concern for their children in the day-to-day school situation.

Further variety can be observed in the relationship between contacting and duty. Overall there is not much relationship at all, but in Ladue there is and it is strongly negative (G = -.54). Some people participate as a result of being contacted, others out of a sense of duty; in Ladue these are alternative routes rather than reinforcing.

One more example of the diversity in patterns of recruitment may be seen in the relationship between the sense of duty and the concern for children. Overall there is no relationship. But in Granite City and Normandy it is quite strong (G = .60 and .52 respectively). In Kirkwood, on the other hand, it is also strong but negative (G = -.64). Duty is a powerful stimulus to participation in Kirkwood, but the activists there do not believe that their children have had much of anything specifically to do with triggering their involvement. In Normandy and Granite City they do believe so, and given the lower social class ranking of those two communities we must consider whether this is not a distinctively lower class combination of factors facilitating participation.

We turn, then, to consider demographic variables and others as well as they relate to these triggering mechanisms. We will look first at education and at overall school activity and do so separately for each of our six communities. Thereafter we will consider a number of other variables, but only in the aggregate. Education may be thought of as a background variable, conditioning an individual's readiness to respond to stimuli to participation. The school activity index measures what happens after the stimulus has triggered the participation. Thus the two represent especially critical and quite distinct variables for assessing the importance of the several triggering mechanisms under scrutiny. Table 4-7 shows that there is a strong relationship between increasing education and issue-triggered participation while there is a negative association with references to children. The latter holds in every community except Kirkwood, where the proportion citing children is low at every educational level. The issue relationship holds everywhere except Normandy. Thus we can feel confident that a genuine education-related effect is present. People of higher education respond to issues, people of less education respond to their children. Education is not simply an indicator of social class, however. Income and occupation are related to the trigger mechanisms in essentially similar ways but less strongly. Education level seems thus to have its own specific effect, not too surprising in a study of school activists, in addition to its significance as an indicator of social class.

Table 4-7

Education Level and What Got You Started

	Education		
% Answering Yes	Up to 12 Years	Up to 16 Years	17 Years or More
Issues	13.2	11.6	26.3
Events	16.1	18.5	23.8
Contact	29.9	32.9	33.3
Duty	71.2	69.4	73.8
Children	44.6	31.0	26.3

In discussing family background we found that the education variable was closely tied to sex. A disproportionate share of the less well-educated participants are women and they reported more family impact, positive and negative, than men. In looking at recruitment mechanisms, we find again that sex and educational level are both operative. Men are more likely to have responded to issues (G = .396), women are activated by their children (G = -.42). Both relationships disappear, however, among the best-educated respondents. Given some post-collegiate education there is no significant difference between men and women in the kind of mechanisms that triggered their involvement.

At the "output" end of things we find school activity related to our triggers in much the same fashion as education but somewhat less strongly.

Table 4-8

Level of School Activity and What Got You Started

	School Activity		
% Saying Yes	Low	Medium	High
Issues	11.0%	13.9%	18.5%
Events	17.8	17.6	19.6
Contact	28.8	32.1	33.9
Duty	74.0	66.8	72.6
Children	42.8	36.9	28.6

This is true as well when one looks at each community separately. Thus we can conclude that, insofar as the starting mechanisms were issues or children, the manner in which participation began is related to the subsequent level of activity. These findings lead us, in turn, to a series of additional questions. Apart from community variations are there other contextual or background factors that are associated with the mode of first starting out? Are there attitudinal variables involved? And are there systematic relationships to the ultimate end result, impact on the participant?

First, there is no significant connection between family impact and the mode of getting started. There is, however, a relationship between age and the children trigger; it is negative (G = .18/Kendall's Tau = .004). Older people are less likely to cite children. We can presume that this reflects selectivity of recollection as much as reality. None of the "rootedness" indicators such as length of residence bears any meaningful relationship to recruitment mechanisms.

When we turn to the participatory and attitudinal profiles that accompany the involvement of people in school activities, we find a distinct and consistent pattern. Table 4-9 presents an array of data with

Table 4-9

Activity and Attitude Variables and What Got You Started

Gamma Scores and Kendall's Tau Significance Level

	Community Activity	Organizational Involvement	Attentiveness to Public Affairs	Evaluation of School	Personal Activity	Importance of Participation
Issues	.23/.01	.22/.01	.22/.01	-.32/.01	.34/.00	.38/.02
Events	.17/.04	.09/.14	.12/.09	.06/.34	-.01/.46	-.01/.46
Contact	.04/.32	.06/.20	.15/.02	.35/.01	-.02/.39	.11/.19
Duty	.07/.90	.12/.05	.04/.28	-.03/.42	.05/.25	.21/.04
Children	-.27/.00	-.26/.00	-.23/.00	.21/.00	-.29/.00	.05/.34

exceptional clarity of meaning. Those who are mobilized by school issues display high levels of personal and organizational activity. They are attentive to public affairs, they are critical of the schools as they presently operate, and they believe that their participation can make a difference. Those people who indicate that their children were important in getting them to become active have opposite tendencies: low levels of organizational or personal involvement outside of schools, less attentiveness, and a strongly positive attitude toward the schools.

Thus far we can say that individual background affects the starting process primarily via sex and social class, especially educational level; that there are strong connections between certain modes of getting started and the later pattern of one's orientation toward and involvement with the schools, community at large, and indeed the whole process of participation. But it should be borne in mind that these relationships really involve only two of the five trigger mechanisms, issues and children. There are a few other interesting correlations to be observed but they do not fit any very clear larger pattern.

The "issue-oriented" participants, if we may call them that, enter with different predispositions and different supporting habits and connections than do the children-oriented participants. The issue group believes in both the possibility and the desirability of change in school programs. The child-centered group supports things as they are. It is not surprising therefore to find, as we noted earlier, that the issue group participates more intensively than does the child-centered group. Moreover, they expect to remain active in school affairs longer.

We would also expect to find that essentially similar relationships obtain when we examine the impact of school involvement on the participant.

Table 4-10 shows that it is only the issue trigger that bears any relationship to our measures of impact. The method by which participants enter the arena of action thus can have a very important effect both on what they do there and how much they are affected by the experience. For most participants, however, this effect is not really present. In any case, in addition to the amount of impact, we wish to know something about its quality. How does perception of the substance of participation impact relate to the starting process?

Table 4-10

Impact of Participation and What Got You Started

(Gamma Scores and Kendall's Tau Level of Significance)

	Impact Summary Index	Opinion Change (1)	Opinion Change (2)
Issues	.23/.01	.22/.04	.51/.000
Events	.07/.23	.18/.06	.13/.14
Contacting	.08/.17	.12/.11	.04/.32
Duty	.13/.05	.12/.12	-.01/.47
Children	-.06/.19	.001/.49	-.09/.18

Table 4-11 summarizes our data on several facets of this question. The patterns are somewhat more diverse than those previously discussed but quite compatible with them. The issue group felt that school participation had cost them something in time, lost opportunity, and so on. The child-centered group did not feel this way. To be sure, there were differences in the amount of activity in which the two groups were engaged. The duty group, which included 70% of the total, also felt that participation had been costly. This is a bit ironic since it might have been supposed that

Table 4-11

Some Kinds of Impact and Modes of Getting Started

(Gamma Scores and Kendall's Tau Level of Significance)

	Did Participation Cut into Time?	Did Participation Exact a Price?	Did Participation Lead to Other Involvement?	Did Participation Result in Personal Satisfaction and Development?
Issues	.20/.06	.41/.00	.01/.48	.32/.03
Events	.09/.21	.26/.01	.05/.36	.03/.43
Contacting	-.03/.38	.08/.23	.23/.01	.03/.41
Duty	.23/.01	.20/.03	-.10/.17	.19/.05
Children	-.36/.00	-.34/.00	-.05/.32	-.18/.05

"doing one's duty" would be perceived as a free good. Perhaps duty in the school context is acknowledged somewhat reluctantly.

Only the contact group reported that school activity had led to involvement in other kinds of concerns. Perhaps the contact group, otherwise difficult to distinguish on the basis of background or attitudinal characteristics, is distinguished by a certain degree of participatory inertial momentum. That is, once they are brought into a system of active involvement, they continue on along a participatory trajectory, entering other arenas and taking an increased part in other types of activity.

Finally, we must note the difference in benefits derived by the various started mechanism groups. We will discuss more fully in the next chapter the whole question of what benefits school participants think they receive from their activity. Our main distinction is among the personal benefits of information, social interaction, and personal satisfaction and growth. In general, we find that the more active the participant is, the more likely he or she will indicate that personal growth is the most important benefit. In Table 4-11 we look only at the relation between starting mechanisms and whether the respondent believed that personal satisfaction and development had resulted. We find a reasonably strong association with the issue trigger and a negative relationship to the child-oriented trigger. The latter group was much more inclined to identify information as the most important benefit, thus once again supporting the view that the child-oriented participants are more passive, more spectator-like, in their approach to school involvement, while the issue-oriented activists not only put more of themselves into this participation; they also get more out of it.

In summary, we can speak of three more or less distinct groups of participants, differentiated according to the factors that give initial impetus to their participation. One consists of people who are brought into active roles by issues. This group tends to be male, of relatively high educational status, and broadly active in community life. They are also relatively critical of the schools. Participation tends to have a significant effect on them. Their opinions about the schools are altered as a result of their experience, quite often for the worse. They also feel that they have grown or developed personally as a consequence of their involvement. This group is not so very large and especially strong in the one community, Kirkwood, which had been most beset by divisive controversy. But it is this group, perhaps, that best conforms to the classic image of the concerned and responsive citizen.

A second group is quite different on nearly every dimension. The trigger here is the children, and those who are brought to participation by this factor tend to be women, especially those with less education, and people who have been generally inactive in any institutional arena prior to their school involvement. Within the school context itself this group tends to be less active than the others and to report less impact.

Does it make much difference whether these people are brought into active roles or not? Should school principals encourage children to encourage their parents to participate? Does it matter if parents feel an obligation to serve their children in this way? In our data there is one kind of activity which children-centered participants are especially likely to undertake. Activities within the school such as room sponsorship, library assistance, and the like are more likely to be undertaken by this group than by any other. Here traditional stereotypes are, perhaps, confirmed. The devoted housewife/mother who drives the car pool and bakes cookies for the class party makes up most of this group of participants. And, although their contribution, to the school and to themselves, falls short of what is possible, the schools would be hard-pressed to replace their contribution to the day-to-day program, and the solidarity and warmth of their families may very well be enhanced as well.

The third and largest group includes everybody else. For the most part, we can say that recruitment processes do not have much to do with how these people act within the school arena or with what they get out of their participation. To understand those processes further we must look not at the background factors but at the participatory activities themselves.

In concluding this section we might introduce an alternative and possibly more appropriate interpretation of the findings we have presented. We have talked of recruitment mechanisms, of how people got started, and this was the explicit form of our questions. The question arises, nevertheless, as to whether our respondents were accurately reflecting their real experience when they responded to the probes. So many people, including those who identified issues as important starter mechanisms, indicate that they got started when their children began school. There is no reason to suppose that issues just happened to crop up in exact conjunction with the attaining of school age, even in Kirkwood. And in fact, quite a few of the Kirkwood issue-oriented activists had been participants prior to the time that the reorganization controversy came to the surface.

What may have happened, therefore, is that pretty much everybody was brought over some threshhold of minimal school activity in the same, child-related way. But, after that initial threshhold was crossed, some people were activated to additional levels of concern by issues, events, or duty. Those who did not respond were a kind of residual category, and they still associate their entry into the school arena with their children. Our data do not insist on this interpretation, but it is a plausible revision of what we have said on the basis of the data taken at face value. In any case, the characterization of the groups remains intact as does their significance in shaping citizen input to school policy.

Is There a Special Sense of Duty Regarding School Participation?

The concept of duty is complex. It may entail the obligation to some individual and highly personal standard of behavior. It may mean a desire to conform to group norms and expectations. It may rest on the feeling that there is a need, in the schools or on the part of the children, that can be met through participation. Like many of our key terms, it may mean different things to different people. We have not attempted to establish what our respondents took the word to mean. We simply went ahead and asked people whether they responded to the term.

In the preceding section we noted that 70 percent of our respondents felt a general sense of obligation to become active. We also noted, however, that duty as a starting mechanism was not significantly related to much else. Let us now turn our attention to a broader conception of the sense of duty to participate in school affairs. In addition to the recruitment probe, we asked the general question: Do you feel more of a duty to participate in school affairs than in other aspects of the community? Three-fifths (59.4 percent) of our activists said they did. When asked why, they overwhelmingly attributed it to the relatively greater importance of children and of parental activities related to the well being of their offspring.

Background variables have almost nothing to do with whether or not a special sense of duty is perceived. Family interest in schools or impact on the respondent are not associated at all with the sense of duty. Sex, age, education and social mobility likewise show no significant relationship to duty. The starting mechanisms, except for the sense of duty itself, are unrelated. We asked at the beginning of this chapter whether the sense of duty might serve to reinforce one or more connections between our background variables and entry into the school arena. Our conclusion is that it does not.

Next, let us consider the relationship between contextual factors and the sense of duty. We may begin with community variations. The most striking departures from the mean are Normandy, nearly twelve percentage points above, and Ladue, more than twelve points below. This fits with everything else we can observe about the two communities. Normandy is governmentally fragmented, it is experiencing an influx of blacks, and it is comparatively working class in social composition. All these factors might be expected to depress participation rates in general and indeed are perceived to have done so in that community.

> "We can count on a "loyal corps" of parents to support a tax levy. Unfortunately, there just aren't enough of them," reported a Normandy school principal. The president of his school's PTA added, "Last month we had wide publicity for a meeting on the tax levy increase. . . . But only 16 people showed up. I don't know what's wrong. What's it going to be like in a couple of years when we don't have a PTA?"
>
> St. Louis Post-Dispatch,
> March 3, 1977

Those who, despite all, do participate feel an especially high sense of duty to do so. Conversely, in Ladue problems hardly exist and one doesn't need as strong a sense of duty to undertake the rather nominal, routine kinds of participatory activities associated with school involvement in Ladue. We are talking about community means only, of course; it should be remembered that even in Ladue 47.1 percent of the school participants acknowledged a sense of duty. Still, Ladue and Normandy are distinctive on this dimension. Note, too, that their distinctiveness is not a result of their different social class composition, for that shows no relationship to the sense of duty.

If we consider another dimension of the participatory context, a different result emerges. We have several questions that have been combined in various ways in order to indicate how active a person is in other kinds of organizations, how active he or she may be specifically in community affairs, and how active in public matters the individual is outside an organizational context. We find that all these are negatively related to a sense of duty regarding school participation. (G = -.31, -.43, and -.11 respectively; Kendall's Tau is significant at .00, .00, and .05 levels.) Now in some parts of our discussion we find these variables to be supportive of school involvement in both time and social space. We look explicitly at the question of whether school participation leads to these other forms of action in Chapter 5, but even where several modes occur more or less in concert, they seem generally to reinforce one another. That is, there is a tendency, though with important exceptions, for people active in one arena to be active also in another. However one thinks about non-school participation modes, however, they are clearly and significantly antithetical to a sense of duty regarding school participation. There is no support for the notion that a school-centered sense of duty leads to a broad array of participatory acts. Rather the reverse; for school participants a sense of duty is an alternative to extra-school participation, not a reinforcement.

The sense of duty does not carry its adherents very far, however. There is virtually no relationship, positive or negative, with virtually any of our measures of the amount or type of activity in school affairs. Indeed, the only such indicator that shows a significant association with duty is holding PTA office, and that association is negative! None of the others works that way, however, so we may wish to pass it over as some kind of accident. The composite index of school activity displays the characteristic relationship, a Gamma coefficient of .04.

Activity does not seem related to duty, but the impact of activity is. The relationship is reasonably strong (G = .22; Kendall's Tau significant at .002) between the sense of duty and the amount of impact. Just exactly why this should be true is not entirely clear, but the supportive reasoning may go like this. The sense of duty we have identified is largely detached from types and areas of participation other than schools. The amount of impact a particular type of participation has depends not just on the amount of participation but on how many other sources of participation impact an individual experiences. The high duty school activists tend to have only the one source; the ones without the explicit sense of school-centered duty have multiple sources of participation impact. Hence, they attribute less importance to any single arena regardless of how much they may actually do there.

A final item provides further support for this line of argument. We asked whether the impact derived from school participation was greater than that from other kinds of activities in the community. Almost half (47.1 percent) said it was greater from school activity. The point here, however, is the relationship to the sense of duty. That relationship is the strongest of any we have discovered using this variable; G = .42, and it is equally strong for women and men.

We conclude that the sense that one ought especially to participate in school affairs is a specialized attitude, not a part of some generalized sense of civic obligation. It is fairly widespread, but it must derive in the main from the dynamics of one's relationship to one's children. At least, it does not come out of the background factors we have investigated. Nor does it predict behavior, either amount or type, within the school setting. But it does have an impact on the quality of the effect that school participation has on the individual. And thus it remains a significant variable warranting further investigation.

FOOTNOTES—CHAPTER 4

1. Some of the principal studies are Kenneth Prewitt, *The Recruitment of Political Leaders*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970; Lester G. Seligman, *Recruiting Political Elites*, New York: General Learning Press, 1971; Lester G. Seligman, Michael R. King, Chong Lim Kim, and Roland E. Smith, *Patterns of Recruitment*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1974; L. Harmon Zeigler, M. Kent Jennings, with G. Wayne Peak, *Governing American Schools*, North Scintate, Mass.: Duxbury Press, 1974.

2. See, in particular, the study by Weisberg, *op*. *cit*.

CHAPTER 5

The Impact of School Participation

One of the major themes of traditional writings about citizen participation has been that it was good for you. We considered several variants of this view in Chapter 1. We noted Aristotle's belief that man only became fully himself, living up to his potential, when he took an active part in the community. Rousseau stressed the learning effects of participation whereby each individual would modify his views to accommodate the needs of others emerging finally in the consensual general will. John Stuart Mill also stressed the educative effects of taking part, with learning a matter of cognitive growth and expanded personal competence as well. And in recent years much of the popular commentary about the virtues of expanded citizen participation has stressed the beneficial effects on the participants. Thus, it has been argued, if poor people take a more active part in planning the programs that are meant to serve them, there may be short term inefficiencies but in the long run the participants will gain so much in personal skill and confidence as to overcome an important part of the handicaps that have kept them in poverty.[1]

These arguments thus have a long and honorable tradition behind them but there is very little systematic research that would show one way or the other what is the case. We may believe intuitively that participation makes a difference. We may be able to cite examples. But we do not have an empirical basis for saying with confidence that civic participation will, in fact, have any particular effects on the participants.[2]

There are substantial difficulties to be overcome before such a foundation can be well-established. First, we need to specify what we mean by participation: what activities are entailed, and how are they to be observed and measured. Second, we must develop the same specificity regarding the operational meaning of impact. Next, how will we know whether a particular set of participation experiences has been responsible for whatever change effects have been observed. A serious difficulty arises, of course, when we use cross-sectional data to identify behavioral or attitudinal changes, which might be considered the indicators of impact. Obviously, it would be preferable to have longitudinal data to work with, but we do not, and very few studies of relevance to our concerns have had such data. In a lengthy review of such impact studies as they could find, Smith and Reddy concluded that existing studies "were not terribly compelling as a set."[3] This chapter will attempt to cope with the difficulties outlined and to present evidence and argument which persuade the reader that school participation makes a real and significant difference to the participant.

Before we go on, we should give some attention to what kind of impact we might reasonably expect to find as a result of school participation. Much of the activity we will consider, perhaps most of it, must be regarded as peripheral to the lives of the participants. Attendance at PTA meetings is rarely a salient event and even the accumulation of such experiences over several years could seldom be expected to alter the fundamental contours of one's life. School participation is episodic and very often routine, even boring in its content. Although it consists of voluntary actions, these do not customarily result from anything like long term life choices or commitments. Much school participation seems almost reflexive, as we have seen in the previous chapter. Moreover, from the point of view of its purposes much, perhaps most, participation is supportive of existing school practices and programs rather than aimed at change. We will examine the detailed forms of activity in a later chapter. The point here is that we should not expect a massive sea change, in either the people or the schools, to result from school participation. If, therefore, we are able to discern substantial impact in our data, it can be interpreted as providing especially powerful support for the traditional argument that active citizenship would lead to increasingly competent and effective citizenship.

How Much Activity is There?

Empirical study of citizen participation has quite often been surprisingly inattentive to the uncertainty that surrounds the focus of their research. There are numerous conceptualizations of participation extant in the literature, and there is not so much agreement among them that we can afford to ignore the variations and proceed cheerfully with our own.

The problem grows far worse, however, when one moves to the operational level. Here, clearly, there are sharply different notions of what constitutes participation, and of its behavioral or attitudinal components. Voting is understood by everyone to be a basic act of citizen participation--that is, of participation as citizen. We know a good deal about the social and attitudinal correlates of voting in national partisan elections. It appears, however, that these relationships are subject to considerable variation over time so our understanding is perhaps less firmly grounded than we thought.[4] But voting occurs in many different settings so that when we consider the full voting experience of a given individual, we encounter even greater complexity. What kinds of votes shall we cover as a part of our citizen role?

We include voting for president, of course, and for all the other offices on the ballot of "official" elections, i.e., those administered by the government. We include voting in referenda. But do we include voting for officials within a nongovernmental organization? What about voting for the offices of a neighborhood organization? Of a professional society? Of a union? The incidence of voting is certainly more widespread than what happens within the formal areas of government. And the distressing fact is that even within those areas we know relatively little about how often people vote or, taking them altogether, in what patterns.

The conception of participation may be expanded to include a variety of campaign-related acts as is done in the SRC election studies. It may be broadened to include involvement in voluntary organizations, contacting public officials, or interacting with other citizens regarding public problems.[5] Although there are studies of the distribution of these modes of activity, they do not, for the most part, permit an accurate characterization of an individual or group according to how much of a given type of activity has been undertaken. Verba and Nie attempted to do so but their resulting "participation scores" reflect the rather severe limitations of their questions. For instance, there is no way in their study to distinguish the citizen who contacts City Hall every few weeks from one who did so once in three or four years. Perhaps their approximation is "close enough" for many purposes, including especially determining what factors account for more or less activity. But we should understand that we do not really have a very accurate reading on the amount of citizen participation that exists.

For our purposes it is vital to establish how much participatory activity people have engaged in because the central hypothesis of our study is that the more active a citizen is the greater the impact of participation will be upon him. Therefore, within the terms of our set of respondents, at least, we must have a clear sense of how much is "a lot" and how that amount compares to "not very much." No claim can be made that a definitive inventory has been created in this study, but we have, at least, attempted to deal with the issue in several different ways. We asked respondents to characterize their school-related activity on a four point scale ranging from very active to not at all active. The distribution is given in Table 5-1. We then asked about the specific

Table 5-1

Self-Rating of School Activity

Very active	34.8%
Moderately active	50.1
Not very active	12.6
Not at all active	2.4

school-related activities people might have taken part in, including such things as serving as room mother, fund-raising events, election campaigns, attendance at various types of meetings and so on. These specifics are analyzed in the next chapter. We asked how often the respondent attended meetings of any type and what proportion of these involved school affairs. Specific questions were asked concerning involvement in school elections, service on PTA cr other school-related committees, and whether any school-related organization office had been held. The proportions involved in these several types of activity are reported in Tables 5-2 and 5-3. It may be seen immediately that for a substantial majority of the school

Table 5-2

Frequency of Meeting Attendance

Number of Meetings per month	Respondents Reporting Meeting Attendance per month, All Types	Respondents Reporting Meeting Attendance per month, School Only
1-2	28%	64.3%
3-4	26	17.5
5-8	25	8.8
9 or more	19	3.1
Missing or none	2	6.3

Table 5-3

Participation in Selected School Activities

	Respondents Reporting School Election Involvement	Respondents Reporting Service on PTA Committees	Respondents Reporting Having Held School Organization Offices
Yes	35.4%	75.0%	64.3%
No	64.6	25.0	35.7

participants, involvement is more than nominal. Attending meetings, serving on committees and even holding office are common experiences. They do not occur all at once, of course. They are distributed over the whole span of an individual's involvement in school affairs. But taken together they constitute the behavioral base on which the respondent's self-images, reported in Table 5-1, are built.

In order to simplify the discussion of school activity we have created an index consisting of the items previously discussed: self-rating, school meeting attendance, school organization office holding, election involvement and committee service. We scored respondents and then divided them into three groups: low, medium and high. This breakdown is used throughout our study as the summary variable for amount of school activity.

It must be stressed that for the most part we can only compare individuals, communities or relationships within our sample, because we have few comparable baselines to use in estimating most aspects of participatory activity of the national population. We would expect, of course, that on average our respondents would be more active in community life than any national sample because they were selected on the basis of at least a minimum level of activism. It is reasonable to suppose that people active in one area of community concern will tend to be more active in other areas as well. Where we have direct comparisons this supposition is amply born out. Thus, as we noted in an earlier chapter, nearly half of the school respondents reported wearing political buttons, putting on bumper stickers, and giving money to partisan candidates. Verba and Nie report that only 13 percent of their respondents gave money, and SRC data from 1952 to 1972 show about 15 percent displaying buttons and stickers. Yet, only one-fourth of our respondents thought of themselves as even moderately active in party politics. So in some areas it is difficult to tell exactly how our respondents might compare with other groups in the larger population.

We may conclude this discussion by underscoring the importance of establishing more precisely than has heretofore been done just exactly what people do when they participate and how often they do it. It is not enough to identify categories of action, as Verba and Nie among others do, and estimate the amount of participation from the number of categories in which a respondent has taken part. Our efforts in this study move a substantial step beyond this by stressing the number of acts engaged in. To be sure, we are able to develop a more sensitive measure of the amount of participation because, by definition, our respondents are all, to some extent, active regarding schools. In any case, we feel better able to assess relationships involving participatory activity with the indicators we have described than most previous approaches have permitted.

The Idea of Impact

The central question of this study involves the relationship between the amount and kind of school-related participation and its impact on the participant. In the previous section we set forth the measures of participatory activity we will employ. Now we must consider the problem of how to measure impact. Our approach to this problem was quite direct. We simply asked respondents to tell us whether as a result of their participation they perceived an impact on their opinion or their lives. We do not have observations at more than one point in time, of course, so that reports of impact, or the lack of it, may be distorted in various ways. On the basis of our face-to-face interview encounters, however, we do not think such distortion was excessive. The reported effects were often enough illustrated by additional comments to persuade us that by and large they were genuine and not just given to please the interviewer.

Our attempt to characterize the impact of school participation has five distinct parts. The first involves opinion change. We asked two different questions, widely spaced in the interview schedule, about opinion change. The first said, "Do you have a different opinion about the schools here than you did before you became active?" Thirty-eight percent said yes. The later question read, "Has your participation altered the way you think about anything?" Some 57 percent answered that affirmatively.

It may have been that "anything" was enough broader than "schools" to elicit more "yes" answers. It is also possible that the additional time spent in the interview setting had helped the respondent to recall effects that had not yet surfaced at the time of the first question. In any case, we will look at each set of responses separately.

A second line of attack on the impact question involved asking directly about the benefits of participation. Again, we approached the matter in two ways. We asked, "In general terms, what would you say your participation in school-related activities has meant to you?" This open-ended question yielded responses that could be grouped into four main categories. One related to personal satisfactions (and in 2.2 percent of the cases, frustration). A second group stressed the expanded stock of information and awareness. A third stressed the contribution of parental participation to the well-being of their children. And a fourth group indicated changes in their pattern of social interaction or in the strength of their identification with their community. The distributions of respondents among these four types was as follows:

Table 5-4

Benefits of School Participation--Response to Open-ended Question

Personal satisfaction	38.3%
Information	43.4
Child-centered	10.7
Social/Community	7.6

A second approach to the benefits question utilized items regarding specific types of possible benefits: personal, informational, social and economic. Only 7.3 percent thought they had derived any economic benefit from school participation. To the other questions, however, 80 percent perceived personal benefits, 72 percent saw some social benefit accruing, and a full 92 percent thought they had acquired more information as a consequence of their activity.

We then asked which of the four types of benefit had been the most significant. Less than one percent gave primacy to economic benefits, so we have excluded them from subsequent analysis. Responses to the other three alternatives were divided as follows:

Table 5-5

Which Benefit Was Most Important

Personal	36.6%
Information	53.2
Social	10.2

It is not immediately apparent what significance should be given to the differences between Tables 5-4 and 5-5. We really had no a priori basis on which to develop expectations regarding how many people would find one kind of benefit more significant than another. A cross-tabulation of the two tables leaves the significance still elusive. The social benefits items tend to elicit somewhat more consistent responses, but none of the categories is without rather substantial confusion. We will return to the analysis of this set of responses later in the chapter.

A third approach to the measurement of impact was based on a probing of the perceived costs of participation. We asked people directly if they felt they had had to pay a price in order to participate in school

Table 5-6

What People Gain From Participation

	Close-Ended Question		
Open-Ended Question	Personal Benefits	Information	Social
Personal satisfaction	46.0%	48.6%	33.3%
Information	39.9	32.1	31.3
Social/Community	6.1	4.9	27.1
Child-centered	8.0	14.4	8.3

affairs. Thirty percent said yes, and nearly three-fifths of these, in turn, identified time as the greatest cost. We also asked directly whether participation had cut into the respondent's time. Just over half said that it had. The latter question seems to have posed an "easier" hurdle to respondents, one they more readily and comfortably acknowledged than the perhaps more threatening concept of "price." In any case, people who believed that participation had "cost" them something had, presumably, been affected by their participatory experience, if only in this rather negative way.

The fourth component in our investigation of participation impact had to do with the extent to which school involvement might have led to other forms of activity. Thirty percent of our respondents indicated that school involvement had led to other things. More than a third of them, in turn, had gone into other child-centered activities like scouting. But forty percent (or twelve percent of the total sample) had moved into other civic activities, and this certainly represented a significant impact of school participation.

Finally, we asked respondents to compare the impact on them of school activities compared to other things. Forty-seven percent thought school participation had a greater effect, twenty-two percent said it was the same, twenty-two percent thought it less significant, and a scattered few were either missing or unclassifiable.

We will examine relationships involving these items separately, but we also aggregated them into a single index. Respondents were scored on the basis of the number of positive responses to these eleven different impact probes and then divided into three groups according to whether the impact of school participation was low, medium or high. Again, it must be noted that we are able to compare only within the range of our 507 school participants. We do not know directly, nor can we fairly infer, what is the case elsewhere. But at least for our respondents we are able, on the basis of these data, to say a good deal about the realtionship between school participation, on the one hand, and in several senses of the term, the impact participation seems to have on the participant.

Opinion Change

Let us turn now to examine a specific component of impact, opinion change. In doing so we can trace out a somewhat more subtle pattern of relationships to participatory activity. We noted that the two questions probing opinion change yielded different patterns of response. Nevertheless, the relationships of each question to other variables turn out to follow much the same pattern, almost never varying in direction and hardly ever in very substantial proportion. Consequently, we will rely on only one of the questions in our analysis.

We find that some communities vary rather substantially. Kirkwood respondents were more than twice as likely to report opinion change compared to Ladue. Much of the Kirkwood change was unfavorable, however, whereas in Normandy there was less change, but it was almost all positive. Quite a few Kirkwood activists became upset and sometimes angry over the reorganization controversy and the heated school board elections. They came to be considerably more suspicious than they had been. "I question things more than I used to," one woman said. In Normandy, by contrast, many people came to believe that their schools were not as badly affected by racial change as they had feared.

For the participants as a group, the factor that seemed most strongly to relate to opinion change was the intensity of the participation experience. Opinion change was more likely to be reported if the respondent had devoted more time to his or her involvement. The duration of activity seemed to make little difference; it was the number of hours per month that mattered. Similarly, holding office as such had little effect but campaigning for the school board, a far more intense experience, did. Demographic factors bore no consistent relation to the likelihood of opinion change. One other factor did, and it may bode ill for those school officials who have encouraged more active participation. Evaluation of the schools was negatively related to opinion change. That is, people who changed their opinions as a result of participation were, in general, more likely to conclude that the schools were not doing a very good job. Much of this relationship, it must be said, stems from the

Table 5-7

School Evaluation and Opinion Change

	School Evaluation	
Opinion Change	Good	Not So Good
Yes	34.5%	57.8%
No	65.5	42.2

Gamma = -.45

single community of Kirkwood, but it does indicate the uncertain effects of promoting citizen involvement.

It is a bit surprising to discover that the overall level of school activity had only a very slight connection with opinion change. Table 5-8 shows a modest relationship but not enough to warrant much comment.

Table 5-8

School Activity and Opinion Change

	School Activity		
Opinion Change	Low	Medium	High
Yes	32.4%	39.7%	41.8%
No	67.6	60.3	58.2

Gamma = -.12

On the other hand, one particular kind of activity does show a strong relationship to ooinion change and that is discussion. The more people talk about the schools, the more likely they are to report opinion change. It would appear that if personal involvement is to lead to opinion change,

Table 5-9

Frequency of Discussion of Schools and Opinion Change

	Frequency of Discussion		
Opinion Change	Daily	Once or Twice a Week	Once a Week or Less
Yes	47.1%	36.8%	28.8%
No	52.9	63.2	71.2

Gamma = .24

the amount of talking may be a better indicator of involvement than doing things. Or, perhaps a better way to put it is to suggest that discussion should be incorporated as a significant component of political participation.

We have examined the matter of opinion change in order to probe the relationship between the amount and kind of participation and its impact on one's attitudes, primarily those involving the schools. In the last section of this chapter we will examine the overall relationship between the amount of activity and the amount of impact on the participant. We will find that relationship to be strongly positive. Here, however, we must note that in its details the relationship is more complex. When one isolates the specific component of impact, opinion change, one finds that sheer volume of activity does not have much to do with it. Rather, it is the intensity of the participatory experience that leads to changes in one's opinions. Other elements of impact may respond more directly to the amount of activity--a sense of its costliness, for example. But we should not forget that even at this level of detail not all participatory activity has the same significance for those who engage in it.

Benefit Groups

We have already mentioned the fact that we were able to differentiate several distinct groupings of school participants on the basis of the kind of benefit they felt had been the most important result to them of this participation. We want now to analyze these groups to see what factors lead to which kind of impact on the participant. It will be remembered that our data came mainly from two questions, one open-ended and one closed, that yielded somewhat different results. There were, however, almost no differences between the questions in the nature of relationships with other variables. Consequently, while we are not sure why the differences occurred between the two questions, we are not much troubled by them in the analysis.

People displayed somewhat less variation than we had anticipated in the kinds of benefits they derived from their school participation. Those who cited personal development as most salient stressed their increased competence, self-satisfaction and a sense of personal accomplishment.

> "It keeps you alive. Your mind is more active, you are more of a person."
> "I enjoyed it. I got a lot of satisfaction. I hope my children will become involved in things too."

The information-oriented people were also quite clearly demarcated.

> "I learned a lot about children and the education system, in particular the changes which have taken place since I was in school."
> "It keeps me up to date."
> "It gives me a chance to really find out what's going on."

But there were some responses that bridged categories. For example, one Kirkwood woman said that, for her, the increased information was critical.

> "I like to be informed and know about the inside. I was working, and I didn't know the facts. It gripes me, people tell me lies."

Clearly, her reasons for wanting the information had to do with her sense of personal competence. Similarly, a Kirkwood male pointed to personal development as most significant but phrased it partly in terms of enhanced social interaction.

> "Remembering names, interacting with people, gaining self-assurance in a group, thinking on your feet; it also includes meeting people. It is impossible not to develop yourself in situations like this."

For the most part, however, the reactions people had to their participatory experiences were quite conventional and present few difficult problems of classification. One may wish to ask how meaningful such reactions are. Do they really reflect any very deeply experienced sense of personal impact, or are the responses essentially superficial, off-the-cuff, statements revealing little of any more profound level of meaning participation might have had? Indeed, one suspects sometimes that the reason the answers were so conventional was that they were given almost reflexively, dredged up from old civics textbooks to satisfy the interviewer of the respondent's personal worth. Routine participation might be expected to give rise to routine statements, of course. In any case, we cannot be sure that we have more than superficial information to analyze. Nevertheless, there are interesting relationships to be observed and, with appropriate modesty about their ultimate significance, we turn now to examine them.

What kinds of relationships might we expect? First of all, it seems reasonable to regard personal development as constituting a more profound effect than the growth of one's information stock. The respondent who reports a change in his or her self-confidence or in the ability to handle social situations or responsibilities has undergone a more substantial impact resulting from the activity in question than one who has, mainly, learned more. The social interaction group is harder to assess, but provisionally one may place them in the middle. An impact on one's social life may be thought of as less consequential than impacts on one's personal capacities but of more effect than an enlarged stock of information.

The likelihood that a participant will experience one kind of benefit rather than another may depend partly on the intensity of the school experience and partly on the context and need setting of the individual. Routine participation might leave little impression on the personality but still increase one's knowledge. A life-long resident of the community might be expected to place less value on the information component than would the new resident. In general, we might suppose that people who had been less advantageously placed in life's circumstances could profit with regard to both information and personal development, but that, ceteris paribus, the personal development effect might be greater. The reasoning is as follows. A poorly educated person, especially a woman, will generally have had fewer opportunities to operate in a public setting: speaking, organizing, directing others and exercising responsibility for a group. He or she is less likely to have been active in organizations while a student or to have participated in other forms of group life as an adult. The school organization and the parental role may offer the first effective chance to become an activist, however modest the nature of the activity may be. And the impact of the experience on the individual's sense of citizen competence, while perhaps small in some absolute sense, may loom quite large in what had been until the school participation a rather inert life context.

To the more well-educated and widely experienced person PTA participation may seem old-hat and humdrum, pretty much a repetition of other organizational experiences. On the other hand, such people may possess little specific information about the schools their children attend and consequently find their information stocks are enhanced as a result of their participation even though they are not otherwise much affected.

If we are cautious, we may carry this argument from the individual level to that of the community. Thus, we would predict that in a predominantly working class community the residents will, in the aggregate, have had fewer participatory experiences. Moreover, we would expect there to be fewer extant organizational settings in which people could acquire such experiences. Those that do exist, therefore, would offer greater potential for impact on the participants.

These expectations are supported by our data. School participants in Granite City, which is lowest among our communities in social rank, have a substantially lower rate of organizational participation than Kirkwood or Ladue. Moreover, Granite City respondents report much the highest proportion of people for whom personal development values were the most important result of school participation. We must be careful of this reasoning, however. Normandy ranks next lowest in social rank and is, as predicted, next lowest also in total organizational participation. But Normandy respondents valued information highly, as highly as Kirkwood or Edwardsville, and gave only rather moderate weight to personal development. Our interpretation of this relates to the structure of the community. Granite City ranks low in social status, but it is well-bounded and strongly integrated in terms of political and social institutions. Normandy, on the other hand, really exists only as a school district. The twenty-three municipalities and assorted other institutional entities in which the residents live their lives are not tied together at all closely. Consequently, one suspects, though we do not know from our data, that Normandy residents simply do not have as much information about their community as do residents of other districts, and the fragmentation of the institutional structure makes information comparatively difficult to obtain. School participation provides a mechanism for overcoming the structural handicaps of the Normandy citizen, and the stress on information benefits may reflect this condition.

Let us return to the individual level data to pursue these questions further. We find that indeed people with less education are more likely to select personal development benefits, and so are people with lower income. Conversely, people on the high end of these scales indicate that information is the greatest benefit derived from school participation. But there are other dimensions involved. The structural integration afforded the individual by the community increases his or her chances to develop deep roots and strong identifications there. A rough measure of rootedness is the length of residence in the community, and we find that to be related to the type of benefit emphasized. Long term residents select personal development, newcomers choose information or social benefits. None of these relationships is terribly strong but they are consistently present.

Strong relationships are found, however, when one shifts to the factors and processes internal to the participation itself. We can look first at the overall amount of school activity, and as Table 5-]0 shows, there is a striking tendency for the more active people to identify

Table 5-10

Amount of School Activity and Benefit Groups

Most Important Benefit	Amount of School Activity[6]		
	Low	Medium	High
Information	65.2%	48.6%	48.5%
Social Interaction	9.6	13.6	7.1
Personal Development	25.2	37.9	44.4

personal development as the most important benefit. Within four of the six communities this relationship holds. Ladue and Normandy are exceptions. In Normandy the choice of personal development is strongly related to income as it is not elsewhere. In Ladue income is also a factor, but the relationship is inverse; the richer the respondent, the less inclined he or she is to select personal development. Perceptions of what is most valuable about one's school participation vary, therefore, with community context, but the predominant pattern is still the association between the amount of school activity and the choice of personal development.

A similar relationship can be observed among those who held some form of office; i.e., those who held school organization office and could therefore be presumed to have been somewhat more active were more likely to select personal development as the chief benefit. Among the candidates for the school board, which was the most demanding single form of activity of any, the relationship is especially strong, as Table 5-11 shows.

Table 5-11

School Board Candidacy and Benefit Groups

Most Important Benefit	School Board Candidacy	
	Yes	No
Information	41.7%	54.9%
Social Interaction	8.3	10.5
Personal Development	50.0	34.7

The logical inference to be derived from these findings is that the more intensive the participatory experience, the more likely the participant is to regard his or her personal development to have been the most significant result. If this is true, it ought then to be the case that those who perceive this participation to have had a substantial impact upon them will also feel the personal growth was most significant. Table 5-12 shows that this expectation is confirmed. The impact of school participation is quite strongly related to the kind of benefit chosen.

Table 5-12

The Impact of Participation and Benefit Groups

Most Important Benefit	Amount of Impact		
	Low	Medium	High
Information	68.5%	56.1%	43.8%
Social Interaction	9.6	10.3	10.3
Personal Development	21.9	33.6	45.9

When we move the analysis a step further, however, we encounter a puzzle. If we examine the school activity-benefit relationship controlling for impact, the relationship is robust at low and medium levels of impact and disappears at the high level. If, conversely, we control for school activity, the relationship between impact and benefit type is again strong when the activity index is low or medium and vanishes at the high level. Part of the problem may stem from the shakiness of our decision to arrange the benefit types in ordinal fashion. If we leave out the "social" category, we find that the impact factor reappears as significantly related to benefit choice at every level of activity while the same cannot be said of school activity. In other words, both the amount of activity and its impact on the individual are related to the likelihood of selecting personal development as the most significant benefit. But it is the impact variable that is the stronger. And this is surely what we would expect. Activity by itself may sometimes leave little trace on the attitudes and perceptions of the actor. To the extent that this is so, the aggregate relationship between the amount of activity and the evaluation of its consequences will be weakened. Only when participation finds expression in significant impact on the participant is its major effect truly felt. And at least one important kind of effect is the perception that one's personal capacities have been enhanced.

Finally, we find that those participants for whom personal development was the most salient benefit were more likely to indicate an intention to become active in other types of community affairs. Those whose school-centered experience was more that of the spectator, leading them to emphasize the value of the information gained, were not so often led to seek additional experiences either for information or for social purposes. Neither of these participation benefits has the same propelling force to push people into further participation in other arenas that the personal development experience has. And this is surely compatible with the argument of such stalwart advocates of expanded participation as John Stuart Mill. His argument was that as a result of participation in local affairs people would enhance their personal capacities to function as citizen and hence to participate further. Not everyone needs this preparatory launching into expanded citizenship; capacities may already be well developed. Of those in need, not all are sufficiently affected by their participatory experience to have it lead anywhere much. But for a substantial portion of the school participants the participatory experience appears to result in the enhancement of personal competence, and thus enhanced they go on to other kinds of community participation.

The Price of Participation

Participation, like other forms of social action, imposes costs as well as yielding benefits. The price is greater for some people than others, of course, and the precise balance between cost and benefit will vary considerably within any group of activists. Presumably, most of those who are still active feel that the balance is positive or they would drop out. At any one point in time, some may be in the process of disenchantment and on their way toward withdrawal. In any case, it is an empirical question.

Our data are rather interesting. Thirty percent of the respondents felt they had had to "pay a price," in time and lost opportunities, to participate in the schools. Not surprisingly, perception of price was quite strongly related to level of activity. That is, the more active a person was, the more likely he or she was to feel the cost. Table 5-13 shows that this relationship was strong. Another factor that showed a strong connection with a sense of price was sex. Men were substantially (Gamma = .61) more likely to report a sense of cost associated with participation. We interpret these findings to mean that the costs of participation have two distinct dimensions. One is objective and is a reasonably direct function of the amount of time taken by the activity. Indeed, among those who had been candidates for the school board some 70 percent felt that a price had been exacted. The more you do the heavier the price.

Table 5-13

Amount of School Activity and Perceived Price of Participation

Perception of Price Paid	Amount of Activity		
	Low	Medium	High
Yes	15.8%	27.8%	44.8%
No	84.2	72.2	55.2

Gamma = -.44

But the other side is more subjective and involves differential perceptions of what alternatives might have been pursued. Well educated people may generally be aware of more appealing options for their time and energy. So perhaps are men, as compared to women. Their sense of opportunity costs associated with participation would be larger. An alternative interpretation of the sex difference would stress role expectations. School participation may be regarded by many women as a natural extension of their maternal role while men may tend more often to regard PTA meetings and such things as a bother and a nuisance.

Moving On

Earlier we noted that thirty percent of our respondents reported their school participation had led them into other types of activity. We also asked whether the respondents expected to become active in some other arenas once they had cut back their involvement in school activities. We have coded the responses into five categories, as indicated in Table 5-14. There is a relatively clear bias in the responses. Sixty percent of the lower strata of income and education answered "none" or "not sure" while only 45 percent of the upper strata did so. Forty-three percent of the best educated (education is more strongly related than income) indicate their intention to expand their civic participation while only 21 percent of the

Table 5-14

Expected Activity if School Involvement is Reduced

Civic, including political and charity	27.2%
Church	8.9
Personal, including family, work, school	12.2
None	45.6
Not sure	6.1

less well-educated do so. Men are more likely than women to opt for civic activity, and they are less likely to pick church or personal pursuits.

It is certainly appropriate to inquire whether people who go on from one kind of organizational activity to another do so because of the impact the first experience had upon them, or whether the sequence of activity reflects a more deep-seated and generalized inclination toward activism. Our data suggest that the future civic activists are already somewhat more active generally in non-school organizations. As Table 5-15 shows, the people who indicated no desire to continue on in other types of activity also ranked somewhat lower on an index measuring their present degree of organizational involvement. There is one anomalous group, the "not sure" category. This smallish group is composed mainly of people who are quite active generally in the community but less so in school-related things, and these respondents find it difficult to tell what they might do when their school activity is reduced. Attentiveness to public affairs is quite strongly related to the expectation to become more active in civic

Table 5-15

Future Activity at Four Levels of Present Organizational Involvement

Activity if School Involvement is Cut Back	Organizational Involvement			
	Low	Low-Medium	Medium-High	High
Civic	17.8%	24.3%	32.4%	34.0%
Church	9.6	9.3	7.6	8.8
Personal	8.7	15.7	10.5	12.9
None	60.9	46.4	43.8	34.0
Not sure	3.5	4.3	5.7	10.2

affairs and inversely to the inclination to withdraw once duty to one's children has been done. It is not unreasonable to suppose from this that those who are more strongly interested in political and civic affairs are more inclined to seek active roles in them whether or not they have been active in school organizations first.

The most striking finding, however, is that those who intend to be civic activists in the future are at present more active in school affairs. Table 5-16 reports the relationship between future intentions and a summary index of the present amount of school activity. The relationship is strong and suggests that those who are most active in school affairs constitute an important source of recruits for civic organizations at a later stage in their lives. In a sense, school organizations appear to provide an apprenticeship experience for community activists.

Table 5-16

Future Activity at Three Levels of School Activity

Expected Future Activity	Level of School Activity		
	Low	Medium	High
Civic	19.0%	24.5%	37.2%
Church	5.4	8.0	12.8
Personal	8.2	14.4	13.4
None	61.2	46.3	31.4
Not sure	6.1	6.9	5.2

We still must ask whether it is the specific impact of school participation that brings people into later civic involvement. Are these people who would not otherwise have sought other institutional arenas in which to take part? We have already noted one of our questions that bears on this issue: "Have you gotten involved in other organizations in the community or in other activities as a result of your school-related work?" The 30.3 percent who said they had done so were split into three groups: 11.9% in civic organizations, 11.7% in scouts, and 6.7% in "other." Scouting is obviously very closely related to school affairs, so we can regard scout activity as constituting a less substantial "move" than involvement in civic affairs. The "other" category includes quite diverse items, but it seems reasonable to treat it as intermediate between the other two. (It is mainly women, 83.1%, who move in this direction.) Thus, we can order these response categories in ascending order of distance from school activity: none, scouting, other, and civic. When we do so we find quite strong relationships between moving out from school participation and the intensity of the respondent's school activity itself (Gamma = .38). The relationship is even stronger (Gamma = .46) between expected future involvement and the impact that participants believe their school activity has had on them. Moreover, those who held school office were more likely to anticipate civic activism than those who did not.

We may look at the matter of impact also by utilizing our summary Impact Index. Table 5-17 shows that there is a modest association between impact and expected future involvement in civic affairs. For men, however, the relationship is strong (G = .59) and so is it for the highest education stratum (G = .65). This suggests that school involvement can encourage and even propel people into broader civic participation, but that the effect is likely to be strongest when it involves those segments of the community who might "naturally" be expected to become active by reason of their positions in the social structure.

Table 5-17

Relationship of School Activity Impact to Expected Future Activity

Expected Future Activity	Impact of School Activity		
	Low	Medium	High
Civic	18.4%	28.7%	29.5%
Church	9.2	7.0	11.1
Personal	12.6	13.5	10.5
None	56.3	44.3	42.1
Not sure	3.4	6.5	6.8

Thus, we are left with a rather mixed conclusion regarding the impact of school participation on future civic involvement, or at least, on present expectations about future involvement. The more active people are in the schools the more likely they are to carry that activism into other institutional arenas. But it is also true that these same people are already more active in non-school affairs so that the specific impact of the school participation experience is difficult to discern. On the other hand, we do find a significant number of people for whom the specific impact is so strongly related to their future intention to participate as to persuade us that for some, at least, the school experience was a decisive force.

The net result, therefore, is as follows. The majority of school participants return to non-participatory private lives. For some, school involvement serves as apprenticeship and staging ground preparatory to civic participation, which however would have been predictable anyway given the class and organizational context in which these people live even without the impetus of school activity. For some, however, the impact of their school-related activity is so important it pushes them into subsequent civic activity that would not have been experienced in the absence of the original school participation.

This last category may only consist of one or two percent of the total number of school activists, and they in turn are only a fraction of the total community. Nevertheless, even this small "circulation of elites" can have an important effect on the overall pattern of community leadership. It means that the schools have projected some "unexpected" individuals into other community roles. So might other participating settings such as the churches or social clubs. Thus, the cumulative effect might be quite substantial. The important point is that school activism not only involves participation within the arena of public education but makes a contribution, however small, to the larger civic arena as well.

The Impact of School Participation

What we have been saying in one way or another represents facets of a larger but simpler theme; namely, the more active a person is, the greater the impact of that activity will be. Table 5-18 presents the cross-tabulation of the two summary indexes we have employed.

Table 5-18

Amount of School Participation and Amount of Impact

Amount of Impact	Participation		
	Low	Medium	High
Low	36.1%	21.6%	8.9%
Medium	48.8	48.3	43.2
High	18.1	30.1	47.9

Gamma = .42

Surely, we would have expected a positive relationship to exist between these two variables. But the strength of association is nevertheless striking. Moreover, no demographic variable displays any significant relationship to the amount of impact. Education, sex, organizational involvement and the length of time over which the participation has been spread; none of these shows anything at all with regard to impact. As we have seen in the previous chapter, family background makes some difference with more active families predisposing their children to greater activity and a greater receptiveness to the effects of that participation. But in addition and perhaps more important is the conclusion that regardless of background, if people are brought into active involvement in school affairs it will make a difference to them. They will be changed. And for anyone who has attempted to rebut the charge that PTA's and their equivalents are trivial time-wasters, this finding is extremely useful.

The Comparative Importance of School Participation

In this section we examine the responses to a question that asked how the impact of school activity compared with other kinds of participation. Forty-seven percent said that school participation had a greater impact on them, 21.5 percent thought there was less, and the remainder indicated that it was about the same. There were, however, significant differences among our six communities as Table 5-19 shows.

Table 5-19

Comparative Importance of School Activity, by Community

	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles
Greater	46.9	53.7	46.1	42.7	71.2	53.0
Same	33.3	27.5	28.1	18.7	19.7	13.3
Less	19.8	18.8	25.0	38.7	9.1	33.7

In Normandy the positive evaluation of school activity was substantially greater; in Ladue and St. Charles the "less important" category was larger. These and other community differences require further discussion. In the aggregate there was no association between the comparative value placed upon school involvement and sex (G = .05). In Normandy, however, there was. Women indicated more enthusiasm than men (G = .21). In St. Charles, on the other hand, it was men who were moderately more inclined toward the schools (G = .14). Whether these differences reflect the structural circumstances of the two communities we cannot say with any confidence. But perhaps the more important finding is the overall lack of a relationship. Inasmuch as school involvement has often been regarded as "women's work," it is instructive to observe that among our respondents men place as high a value on their participation as do women.

There was no meaningful relationship found overall between the relative significance attached to school participation and age (G = .03). When the communities were considered separately, however, age was of some importance in Kirkwood (G = -.21), Normandy (G = -.15) and Ladue (G = .15). The curious thing, of course, is that the signs are different. In Kirkwood and Normandy it was the younger people who were inclined to think that school involvement was more significant, while in Ladue the older age cohorts gave it a higher value.

This complexity is increased when we examine length of residence. Overall, the relationship to the comparative importance of school involvement is negligible (G = .09). In Edwardsville, Ladue, Normandy and St. Charles, it is the long term residents who tend to value school involvement more highly. In Kirkwood and Granite City, on the other hand, the opposite is true. None of the correlations exceeds .25, but even these moderate relationships are perplexing. In Kirkwood there is consistency; younger people and newer residents give school participation a higher rating. In Normandy, however, there is confusion. There it is younger people and long-term residents who value school activity more highly.

Education we used here as elsewhere as our principal surrogate for class status. We find a moderate negative relationship (G = -.16) between education and the relative significance attached to participation. But this relationship is especially strong in Granite City (G = -.35) and St. Charles (-.26) and mostly fades away elsewhere. Granite City is, as we have noted, a predominantly working class community with a strong sense of boundaries and identity. It displays a lower rate of organization participation and may well have a less complex social structure altogether. In that kind of setting the schools constitute particularly significant opportunities for participation. But well-educated people are more aware of extra-community opportunities. Living in a metropolitan area their sense of the operative world is broader than simply the town of their residence. Consequently, it may be argued, they place a lower relative value on participation in the schools.

St. Charles is a rather different kind of community. The rapid growth of recent years and the gradual incorporation into the greater St. Louis metropolitan area may have had the effect of encouraging a differentiation in perspective between upper and lower social strata. It is reasonable to suppose that the former would move more quickly into a cosmopolitan frame of reference, in which school participation might lose some of its value relative to other kinds of activity. Neither of these interpretations can be more than suggested by our data, but at the very least they suggest that there is considerable variety in the functional importance of school participation as we move from one community setting to another.

Although we cannot firmly establish every dimension of the relative importance of school participation, our data do display two other relationships that are reasonably strong and compatible with what we have been suggesting. If our reasoning has been correct, it would follow that the more involved a person was in non-school activities, the less highly he or she would value school participation. For our respondents the relationship is -.20, but this probably understates the strength. In three communities, Edwardsville, Granite City, and Normandy, the Gamma correlations hover around -.3 and this certainly supports our earlier suggestions that in places like Granite City and Normandy the comparative dearth of alternative organizational opportunities gives to the schools a particularly important place as an arena for encouraging participation.

Finally, we may consider the connection between the relative value placed upon school activity and the amount of that activity in which the respondent engages. The relationship is reasonably sturdy (G = .27), and it can be observed at a meaningful level in every one of the six communities. Thus we can conclude with some confidence that the more active in school affairs people become, the more important they think that activity is. We do not know, of course, whether people who become especially active may make that choice because they already regard the schools as especially important institutions, or whether it is the participatory experience that leads them to their positive evaluation. In any case, however, we can say that becoming involved in school activity does not appear to result in disillusion or cynicism about the performance of the schools or the essential worth of citizen participation in the school arena.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER 5

1. See the discussion in Pateman, op. cit., and in Cole, op. cit.

2. For a broad-ranging review of the research literature on the impact of participation on the participant see David Horton Smith and Richard D. Reddy, "The Impact of Voluntary Action upon the Volunteer/Participant," in Smith, ed., Voluntary Action Research: 1973, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973, pp. 169-239.

3. Ibid., p. 197.

4. The extended debate over the importance of issue-orientations in voting illustrates the vitality, and uncertainty, of this field. See, for example, the recent volume edited by Richard Niemi and Herbert Weisberg.

5. For a particularly helpful review of the diverse formulations of the concept of participation see James N. Rosenau, Citizenship Between Elections, New York: The Free Press, 1974, especially pp. 92 ff.

6. Gammas are not reported on this or subsequent tables dealing with benefits derived from participation even though they generally are fairly strong, because there seems to be little theoretical warrant for regarding the benefits as ordered in any linear fashion.

CHAPTER 6

The Specifics of Participation

In the study of participation, whether narrowly political or broadly social, the specification of the activities that constitute participation has made slow progress. As we noted in Chapter 1, for many years, and to a very considerable extent even today, political participation has meant primarily voting. The counterpart to voting in the social sphere has very often been membership in voluntary organizations.[1] Joiners have been regarded as the activists of society at least since Tocqueville. With the advent of survey research a great many more participatory details could be and have been investigated, but in the sphere of political participation most of these have still been centered in the electoral process, and conceptually they have been built up from the basic act of voting. Thus, giving money, displaying signs and bumper stickers, attending political meetings, and joining political organizations were arrayed in an essentially unidimensional scale of ascending order of cost or difficulty. Election studies of the Survey Research Center have regularly inquired about these acts of electoral participation since 1952, so that we now have a reasonably well-developed understanding of this aspect of participation.

Milbrath's 1965 summary of the literature in political participation placed the phenomena on a unidimensional scale, as had Lane's earlier review,[2] but already there were studies that employed a different focus. Dahl's Who Governs? differentiated between electoral and non-electoral participation and emphasized that the social correlates of the two were quite different. Almond and Verba inquired about political discussion as well as voting and organizational membership. In these works, however, the issue of dimensionality was not really joined. Nor was it in those investigations that characterized certain groups of political activists--party organization regulars, for example--as distinct sub-cultures with distinct patterns of civic orientation and value who did not necessarily share the perspectives or full range of behavior of those ordinarily thought to occupy the top rungs of the participatory ladder.[3]

The work of Verba and Nie has looked directly at the dimensionality of political participation. Like the survey work that preceded it, their study asks respondents about twelve specific kinds of activity. Five of these are election-centered: voting regularly in Presidential elections, always voting in local elections, attempting to persuade others to vote as they were, actively working for a party or candidate during an election, and giving money to a party or candidate during an election campaign. Two are organizational: active memberships in organizations involved in solving community problems, and membership in a political club or organization. One is a bit ambiguous; having attended a political meeting or rally could be a campaign act, an organizational act, both or neither. The other four are rather different. They include: working with others trying to solve community problems, forming a group or organization to attempt to solve some community problem, contacting a local official about some issue or problem, and contacting a state or national official.

We need not linger over whether this list fully represents the range of participatory acts or whether the responses accurately reflect real behavior. There is clearly some overreporting. The survey was conducted in 1967 and recollections about electoral involvement three or more years before are likely to be quite cloudy. The important point about the Verba and Nie work, however, is that it uncovered several distinct participatory dimensions. They identified six types of participatory profiles or groupings: those who were inactive, those who voted only, those who participated more broadly in campaign activity, those who were active in attempting to deal with community problems, those who contacted officials but only for narrow, personal purposes, and those who were active on all these fronts. The empirical distinction between what Verba and Nie call communalists and particularized contacters appears to be partly an artifact of how they coded the responses, but again for our purposes it is less significant that there are or are not really six types than that there are separate and distinct types of participation with different correlates and different impacts.

Implicit in the Verba-Nie analysis is the point that the different groups of participants are to be found in different institutional arenas. The electoral activists are different from the communalists; contacters on the local level are different from those who work in state or national arenas. This fits very well with our investigation which focuses on a specific institutional arena, the schools, to study what people do there. But if participation varies according to institutional arena, it follows that the more specific forms of activity are likely to vary also. The list of election-related activities is reasonably standardized and widely accepted, but there is no comparable list of "communal" activities and we know comparatively little about what people actually do when they "contact" officials. Verba and Nie asked set questions about participatory acts, but they do not show whether their list suitably represents reality.

Milbrath and his associates conducted a study in Buffalo in 1968 which also found participation to be multidimensional.[4] Their questions were somewhat different from the Verba-Nie set but they, too, distinguished among "mere" voters, contactors, campaigners and community activists. In addition, they found two other groups, protestors and communicators. Protestors included people who were prepared to engage in civil disobedience or even take to the streets. Verba and Nie had excluded extra-legal participation from their concern and so this set of activities does not appear in their work. Milbrath, et al., report that people who keep informed, discuss politics, and write letters to editors and to public officials also are a distinguishable set empirically. So they wind up with seven types.

All of this is to suggest that we need a more open-ended approach to the determination of what constitutes non-electoral participation. In this study we have attempted to identify the principal types of things school activists do and to establish from our data such modes as may appear genuinely distinct and theoretically distinguishable. We operate at a level of detail that is finer than in previous studies because we are confined to a single institutional arena. Our primary source of data is the responses to the open-ended question, "There are many different kinds of activities related to school that people can engage in. What kinds of things have you done in the past year or so? Tell me as many different things as you can think of." We turn now to those responses.

An Inventory of Activities

In what specific kinds of activities do participants in school affairs engage? The list is quite long and rather diverse. To begin with, virtually everyone attends at least some school meetings. The design of our research assured that our respondents would be meeting goers, of course; we attended meetings ourselves in order to gather their names. But it is surely true that the concept of "taking part" requires at a minimum that people do things and, since the "part" that is taken exists in a context of social or group life, the "taking" will occur in that context also. Participation cannot then be either passive or solitary. And activity in a group context, if it is not wholly informal, implies meetings, gatherings, a coming together. There may be informal activity, of course, but it is hard to imagine any sustained participation that remained entirely unstructured. Back room negotiation, for example, can rarely be sustained indefinitely without some front room meetings to legitimize the bargains. And back fence discussion taken by itself, while a form of participation to be sure, generates so little impact on either the system or, probably, the participant that it does not attract our interest.

Voting is an act that is both formal and takes place in a social context. To the extent that the study of participation includes the study of voting, it will encompass the behavior of many who never attend meetings. Previous studies have established quite firmly that for many people voting is their only significant mode of political activity. While voting surely affects who wins and how resources are allocated, it is also true that in most institutional arenas a very large share of the relevant decisions are made in a context of demands and pressures from participants whose activity level is considerably more intense. Moreover, although we do not have very much evidence on what the acts of voting mean to the individual, it seems reasonable to assume that the impact is seldom very great. Going to meetings is, at least potentially, a major step forward toward significance. Attending meetings may thus be regarded as a fundamental threshhold to participatory activity, at least in school affairs, and this is not just an artifact of our research design.

As we noted in the previous chapter, the number of meetings attended by our respondents is impressive. Less than one third attend two meetings or less per month. More than one-third attend six meetings or more per month. Naturally a high proportion of those involved school matters, but it is considerably less than the total. Only about one-third of our respondents attend more than two meetings per month that deal with school affairs. There are some interesting demographic variations. Older people attend more meetings of all types than do younger. Men attend more than women, Catholics attend fewer than non-Catholics. None of these variables affects school meeting attendance, however. Education strongly affects meeting-going in general (G = .42) and is moderately (G = .17) related to school meeting attendance. Length of residence is unrelated as is the duration of school involvement.

There are important differences among the communities. Kirkwood activists attend substantially more meetings than others do, and while a comparatively large proportion of these deal with school matters, a great many occur on other topics as well in that community. Normandy, on the other hand, reports a rather standard level of overall meeting-going, but a large proportion deals with school affairs. Edwardsville and St. Charles are a bit on the low side regarding meeting-going in general but considerably lower regarding school meetings.

Again, therefore, we find that communities vary in the extent to which they provide a context of organizational life. Moreover, the share of that organizational life occupied by school activity will also vary and do so in at least partial independence. Thus, Normandy School District offers a much more meaningful opportunity for participation than does the higgledy-piggledly mess of local governments that occupy the same geographical space. We know that educational level affects the likelihood that individuals will avail themselves of the opportunity to take part in both the organizational life of the community and in the school-centered portion. Once in, education has some effect on the amount of participation as well. Other class and demographic factors have some effect on the disposition to go to meetings generally, but among school activists these variables do not affect attendance at school meetings. Community context does, and, as we will show in a later chapter, so does the amount of leadership responsibility. We can thus support a demographic explanation of the general tendency to become active in organizations but we require a largely organizational explanation for the amount of activity undertaken within a particular kind of organization. That is, it is factors within the structures and processes of the group that determine how much and what kind of activity will take place more than the kinds of people who belong. We will return to this hypothesis, which possesses very broad significance, at some later stages of our study.

We sought to obtain a full inventory of specific behaviors engaged in by school activists by asking what kinds of things they had done in the past year or so and going on to suggest some of the possibilities.

> There are many different kinds of activities related to the schools that people can engage in. What kinds of things have you done in the past year or so? For example, have you gone to PTA meetings, school board meetings, worked in the school as a room sponsor, helped in fund-raising affairs, and that sort of thing? Tell me as many different things that you have done as you can think of.

In addition to attendance at PTA meetings, which included virtually everyone, we discerned seven distinct types of activity. These categories and the proportions indicating participation are given in Table 6-1. It should be noted that respondents were not given this list and asked specifically whether they had taken part in any of the seven types of activity. Rather, these are the coded responses to an open-ended, but leading, question. A checklist might have produced more affirmative answers.

Table 6-1

Types of Activity of School Activists

Attendance at school board meetings	34.9%
Closed meetings--PTA executive boards, school boards, etc.	36.1
Formal committee meetings	17.8
Informal, ad hoc, meetings	31.8
Room sponsor, other activities within the school	48.7
School elections	37.5
Fund-raising activities, special events outside school	56.8

So also might a longer time frame, though memories are often faulty when cast backwards over even one year's time. The percentages may understate the total amount of activity, but relative frequency should not be affected by these considerations.

The individual categories of activity set forth in Table 6-1 are generally quite distinct from one another. Table 6-2 presents a correlation

Table 6-2

Correlation Matrix of Types of School Participation

School Board Meetings	---	.11	.16	-.03	-.13	.07	.34
Closed Meetings		---	.07	.02	.11	.11	.21
Formal Meetings			---	.09	-.06	-.02	.17
Informal Meetings				---	.14	.04	-.04
Within School Support Activities					---	.19	-.03
Extra-School Support Activities						---	.02
Election Activities							---

Pearson's r correlations of .13 or more are significant at the level of .001

matrix of the seven items, and most of the correlations are fairly low. Two clusters are of some importance, however. The strongest relationships are those connecting the attendance at school board meetings with attendance at closed committee meetings, at formal committee meetings and involvement in school-related elections. The group of activists involved in this cluster is really the activist elite. They tend to be somewhat older, male, longer resident in the community, active longer in school affairs, and of higher socio-economic status.

They are more active in school affairs generally. Table 6-3 shows

Table 6-3

School Activity Level and Participation in Specific Activities

	Self-Rating of Activity	School Activity Index
School Board Meetings	.51	.54
Closed Meetings	.37	.58
Formal Meetings	.28	.34
Informal Meetings	.16	.16
Within School Support Activities	.08	.05
Extra-School Support Activities	.23	.29
Election Activities	.42	.71

the relationships between each specific form of activity and two different measures of overall intensity of involvement. One of these is the self-rating of school activism, the other the school activity index which, it should be noted, includes the election item under discussion here. It is clearly among the most active participants that relationships with the clustered activities of meeting attendance and election involvement are highest.

On the other side of this coin is a different cluster of items in which people who are active in within-school activities such as room sponsors or assisting in the library also tend to take part in informal meetings. This group of participants tends to be younger, of lower status, newer in the community, and predominantly female. Participation in this cluster is negatively associated with involvement in the "elite cluster," and this negative relationship is stronger at higher levels of school activity. That is, the person who is active in elections, attends school board meetings, and the like is likely not to serve as a room mother and especially not if he or she is highly active. (The overall relationship between electioneering and within-school activity, for instance, is -.03 (Gamma), but among those with high ranking on the school activity index it is -.22.)

In short, there are two discernible groupings of school participants, involved in distinct sets of activities. It is hard to choose terms to characterize the two groups without appearing to "put down" those who work primarily within the school in volunteer support roles. This group, largely made up of younger mothers, contributes important services in the operations of school programs. It is often these participants who staff the school library and provide necessary assistance for field trips and other enrichment activities. Without them, the educational experience is likely to be a good deal less effective. It may also be true that it is this kind of participation that makes the greatest contribution to improving the quality of parent-child relationships. The visible presence of concerned and helpful parents may often be of critical importance in establishing a confident sense of selfhood among elementary school children. Nevertheless, if, by meaningful participation, we mean actions tending to have an impact on policy or on the participant, then within-school activities are of less significance than the other kinds.

Policy-centered participation or, to use Easton's terms, demand activities would be expected to have more impact on school policy. In our data those who attend school board meetings believe that their activity makes a difference (G = .31) while the within-school workers do not (G = -.05). Similarly, the former group expects the school would be responsive to their complaints (G = .15), the latter do not (G = -.11).

It is also true that what we have termed "support" activities have less impact on the participants themselves than "demand" activities. Employing our index of impact we find that the relationship between within-school participation and impact is nonexistent (G = -.02), while that between attendance at school board meetings and impact is strong (G = .47).

Although, as Table 6-3 shows, there is a relationship between the kind of activity and the amount, it is also true that some people participate extensively in supportive activities such as PTA committees and within school projects. They rank high on the activity index but lack the purposive intent that others may have. These are quite different kinds of people in many respects, but the full analysis of the differences between supportive activists and purposive activists must await the completion (expected date, August, 1977) of the dissertation of Mr. Rodney Wright, who has been associated with the project from its beginning.

Campaign Activities

School election campaigns are held with great frequency in America.[5] Some two-thirds of the nation's school boards are elected, and in many communities, including all those in this study, a portion of the board is chosen each year. Many jurisdictions must approve the school tax levy annually, or at least agree to any increase, and bonds for new school construction must also be voted on. Not all of these elections are particularly controversial, of course. Candidates often run unopposed, and then only minimal campaign activity takes place. Some school tax elections, especially those that seek only to maintain the present levy, are quite routine. In these situations only a handful of citizens will take part beyond the act of voting. It is instructive, and rather surprising, that only 37.5 percent of our school activists had participated in election-related activities beyond the act of voting, but the reason is surely that so many of the elections were essentially without conflict.

Of the total sample, 7.3 percent participated in tax or bond elections, 22.5 percent in candidate elections, and 7.7 percent in both. But, of course, those proportions varied considerably from one community to another. In Kirkwood, for instance, there were no tax or bond elections during the period under consideration, while in Edwardsville and St. Charles these loomed more important than candidate contests. The level of community controversy over schools also affected the proportion involved in campaigns. Thus, Kirkwood had much the highest proportion involved, 57.5 percent; and it also displayed a considerably higher level of general voter turnout in school-related elections.

There are interesting demographic differences between those who participate in election campaigns and those who do not. The campaigners are older and include a disproportionate share of men. They are distinctly better educated and of higher income (G = .43 for each). They are somewhat more likely to be veterans both of the community and of participation itself. Among all the kinds of school activity, campaign participation is the only one that is even weakly (G = .19) related to the number of children in the respondent's family. All these individual relationships suggest that campaign involvement is, as we noted earlier, an activity dominated by a sort of participant and purposive elite, deeply involved in and committed to the achievement of an effective school program.

Let us now move a step further and consider the different kinds of activities in which school campaign participants take part. We have sorted these into eight categories as indicated in Table 6-4. The proportions call for some comment. First, canvassing is the activity that involves the largest number of people and informal solicitation is second. Thus, a substantial fraction of the school participants attempt to persuade others to vote for their preferred choices. Only a small fraction, however, give money, hold coffees or post signs. In part, surely, this is because money and signs are used less in school campaigns than in the usual run of partisan election situations. In part, also, however, it may be that school elections

Table 6-4

Types of School Campaign Activities

Type of Activity	Proportion of All Respondents Engaged
Give Money	3.0%
Work in Campaign Headquarters	10.3
Canvass	31.6
Post Signs, Bumper Stickers	8.7
Hold Campaign Leadership Positions	9.9
Public Endorsement	7.7
Hold Coffees, Other Within-Home Campaign Assistance	4.3
Informal Soliciting of Voters	14.0

are typically less thoroughly organized than, say, elections for the legislature. Canvassing and informal contacting involve less organizational structure than money raising, bumper sticker printing or coffee holding, though they do not necessarily involve less effort. School elections might well be expected to attract one-to-one, person-to-person campaigning to a greater extent than partisan elections where the reported activities give a far smaller place to face-to-face efforts at persuasion. The absence of partisan cues and partisan barriers may help encourage efforts at interpersonal campaigning. In addition, the essentially local and circumscribed character of school elections may itself encourage greater face-to-face contacting by those who care enough about school outcomes to become active. These are not really mass elections. They are relatively intimate. Instead of depending on the mass media to mobilize the voters, suburban school elections involve people talking to each other. It is a different mode of participation than most electoral campaigns have room for.

It should be noted, of course, that the proportion of the total population which participates actively in school elections is small. Even among the school activists the fraction that engages in most types of campaign work is modest indeed. We operated within a rather short time frame, however, asking only about working in school election campaigns in the last year or two. Apart from Kirkwood, the bulk of the elections referred to by our respondents were relatively noncontroversial affairs, and these proportions may therefore considerably understate the potential for school campaign participation.

If we look at the record in specific communities, the differences are striking. Kirkwood, where controversy was undoubtedly highest, was the site of much greater activity of every kind. Table 6-5 shows the percentage

Table 6-5

School Campaign Participation by Community

	Edwards-ville	Granite City	Kirk-wood	Ladue	Nor-mandy	St. Charles
Money Giving	—	2.3%	12.5%	2.3%	—	1.1%
Work in Headquarters	5.7%	7.0	26.2	6.9	3.9	12.2
Canvass	26.1	22.1	47.5	39.1	25.0	30.0
Post Signs	2.3	8.1	30.0	2.3	2.6	7.8
Campaign Leadership	6.8	3.5	26.2	5.7	5.3	12.2
Endorsement	1.1	11.7	17.5	5.7	2.6	14.4
Coffees, etc.	—	—	17.5	3.4	1.3	4.4
Informal Solicitation	3.4	9.3	36.2	10.3	3.9	20.0

of the total respondents in each community taking part in each type of activity. It is interesting that canvassing was fairly common in every community, while money giving and coffee sponsorship were uncommon everywhere except in Kirkwood.

We may pass quickly over the question of how specific types of campaign activities are related to the demographic characteristics and community roots of the participants. The short answer is that there are no appreciable differences among the relationships of age, sex, education, income, length of residence or length of school involvement and the several types of campaign activities. Nevertheless, the campaign acts were distinct from one another. Of twenty-eight individual inter-correlations (Pearson's r) only two were above .5 and six others were above .4. As Table 6-5 above shows, there were important variations from one community to another, and these were not simply the products of the demographic profiles of the individuals involved. In addition to the community differences, they did reflect, to some extent, differences between the generally more active school participants and the generally less active.

We have two different measures of general school activity level, one reflecting the respondent's self-assessment and one derived from the respondent's actual school-related activities. In general, the latter, being a behavioral measure, would be preferable, but in this case it is a bit suspect since it includes as one of its eight items whether or not the respondent participated in an election campaign. A sizable fraction of those who answered that question affirmatively had joined in only one of the eight types of campaign acts, typically canvassing. In calculating the overall score on school activity a respondent who only canvassed can get the same result as the one who was far more active in campaigns. In general this probably makes little difference,but for assessing the relative significance of different types of campaign acts it can be important.

The self-rating does not present this same difficulty, and if we combine it with an inspection of the inter-correlation of the eight campaign activities we can identify which ones are associated with overall activism and which are not. Table 6-6 displays both sets of relationships. The correlations involving money giving are probably unreliable since they are based on such small numbers. Two other items display consistently low relationships to every other item including each other--canvassing and coffee-holding. On the other hand, work in headquarters, posting signs, endorsements, informal solicitation and campaign leadership are all rather strongly associated with one another and with an overall self-appraisal of a high level of school activity. We probably ought not to dwell on the finer distinctions within this set of relationships. It is enough to

Table 6-6

Campaign Activities, Relationships to School Activity Self-Rating and to Each Other

Campaign Acts	School Activity Self-Rating	Give Money	Work in Headquarters	Canvass	Post Signs	Campaign Leadership	Endorsements	Hold Coffees	Informal Solicitation
Give Money	-.01	—	.22	.08	.30	.27	.31	.09	.37
Work in Headquarters	.33		—	.11	.42	.55	.44	.19	.44
Canvass	.02			—	.11	.04	.05	.07	.12
Post Signs	.30				—	.30	.22	.24	.42
Campaign Leadership	.28					—	.63	.16	.49
Endorsements	.24						—	.14	.49
Hold Coffees	.09							—	.09
Informal Solicitation	.21								—

Pearson's r, .15 or higher is significant at .01

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observe that apparently canvassing and coffees involve the less active portion of the campaign participants. They are, in effect, supportive actions, much like room sponsors in the more general school activity inventory. The more active people do different things. They undertake the organizational tasks, such as campaign leadership and headquarters work. And they also engage in the more explicit expressive activities such as endorsements and sign posting. For illustration, correlations (Gammas) run from -.5 to -.64 between within-school supportive activity and the important types of campaign acts. Board candidacy relates above .6 to all the campaign acts except canvassing, and holding coffees, where the relationships are not significant.

Again it should be remembered that there is no variation to speak of among these types of activities according to the socio-economic characteristics of the participants. Moreover, since Kirkwood is so high in canvassers and coffee holders, as well as other types, we must conclude that community conflict mobilizes both deep campaign involvement and the somewhat more "shallow" supportive participation of canvassing and coffee sponsorship. But it is those school participants who are most active in general and across the spectrum of school affairs who take the most prominent and active roles in school election campaigns.

Factor Analysis of Participation Modes

We have considered several specific forms of school participation, noting the interrelationships among them and the factors that seemed to characterize those who engaged in one form or cluster of activity as against another. All this is done in pursuit of a definitive formulation of the modes of school participation. As we saw earlier, Verba and Nie have suggested not only that participation was multi-dimensional but that the dimensions they had uncovered were, in fact, the fundamental set, valid not only in the United States but in other democratic polities as well.[6] Milbrath and his associates found additional participation modes, however, by asking additional questions. And the strong implication of our analysis thus far is that we have uncovered still other modes of citizen activity by asking somewhat different questions and asking them about participation in a different institutional arena.

We have not thus far attempted, however, to follow one of the critical procedures for assessing the underlying relationships that may link together a set of variables, factor analysis. There is no reason to assume that this procedure will, as if by magic, produce an unchallengeably valid answer to the question of how many generic participation modes exist or what they are. Nonetheless, it is useful to examine alternative procedures and, recognizing that any formulation must be tentative, to consider several different ways of talking about the kinds of activities people undertake.

Table 6-7

Rotated Factor Matrix of School Activities

Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
PTA Meetings	-.39	-.04	.08	-.09	-.15
School Board Meetings	.32	.36	.18	.31	-.09
Within-School Activities	-.36	-.11	.00	.05	.13
Fund Raising--Special Events	-.37	-.03	.16	.13	-.01
Informal and ad hoc meetings	-.04	-.03	.07	.06	.71
School Meetings per month	.04	.15	.16	.67	-.02
School Campaign Activities	.35	.37	.25	.31	-.05
PTA Committees	-.11	-.09	.58	.21	.06
Discuss School Affairs	.09	.18	.20	.34	.10
Write Public Officials re Schools	.06	.54	.03	.05	.08
See Public Officials about Schools	.09	.69	-.04	.13	-.01
Write editors about schools	.11	.51	.01	.16	-.13
Vote in state and local elections	.14	.17	.25	.10	-.08
Time spent per month on schools	-.08	.11	.07	.68	.08
Officer PTA	-.22	.04	.57	.04	.08
Member Citizens Committee	.20	.20	.11	.20	-.03
School Board Candidate	.62	.23	-.06	.37	-.15

Table 6-7 presents the results in a varimax rotated factor matrix.

The variables represent not only the specific school activities we have already talked about but also a number of other kinds of activities carrying school content but operating through somewhat different mechanisms. It will be noted that the first factor loads most heavily on school board candidacy, with campaign activity and attendance at school board meetings also loading reasonably heavily. Notice, in addition, that several variables show heavy negative loadings. These are the typically supportive activities: attendance at PTA meetings, participation in within-school activities, and fund raising and other special events. It seems clear that the first factor represents purposive activity focused on the school board, and it is sharply differentiated from supportive activists.

The second factor includes campaign activity and attendance at school board meetings also, but its heaviest loadings involve unstructured personal actions: writing to the media about school affairs, writing public officials concerning the schools and going to see public officials. The people whose activities are reflected in this factor are as purposive as those discussed above, but they choose different methods to pursue their purposes.

Third is a PTA activist factor. The two variables that load heavily are service on PTA committees and officership in the PTA. The fourth factor represents people who are meeting goers. Attendance at school meetings and spending time in school activities are the critical components, although there is a strong presence of the variables from Factor 1 as well. Factor 5 loads heavily on only one variable, participation in informal meetings.

On balance, this set of factors has an intuitively pleasing and interpretable structure. The principal factor analysis got only a slightly different result, as shown in Table 6-8. There, Factor 1 loads not only

Table 6-8

Principal Factor Matrix of School Activities

Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Communality
PTA Meetings	.22	.19	.23	-.16	.15	.19
School Board Meetings	.60	-.05	.01	-.06	-.08	.37
Within-School Activities	-.19	.29	.05	.08	.18	.16
Fund-Raising Special Events	-.06	.36	.12	-.08	.16	.18
Informal Ad hoc Meetings	-.03	.31	-.13	.61	-.16	.52
School Meetings Per Month	.56	.31	-.20	-.07	.21	.49
School Campaign Activities	.63	-.01	.00	-.04	-.15	.42
PTA Committees	.15	.54	.01	-.16	-.23	.40
Discuss School Affairs	.40	.21	.05	.06	-.02	.21
Write Public Officials about Schools	.40	-.09	.31	.21	.01	.30
See Public Officials	.55	-.18	.36	.18	.13	.51
Write Editors	.47	-.14	.25	.00	.10	.31
Vote in State and Lo[illegible]	.29	.06	.07	-.11	-.16	.13
Time [illegible] Schools per month	.46	.37	-.21	.04	.32	.50
Officer PTA	.08	.51	.23	-.10	-.23	.38
Member Citizen Committee	.36	-.01	-.02	-.03	-.06	.13
School Board Candidates	.63	-.33	-.29	-.08	-.06	.60
Eigen Value	2.84	1.35	.61	.56	.45	
% of Variance Explained	48.8%	23.3%	10.5%	9.6%	7.7%	

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on the school board-oriented purposive activities but also on the writing and contacting activities that were in a separate factor in the rotated solution. The latter variables also reappear, however, in Factor 3, though the last three factors all have quite low eigen values and must be treated cautiously. Factor 2 in Table 6-8 is similar to Factor 3 in Table 6-7, and Factor 4 in Table 6-8 resembles Factor 5 in Table 6-7. The connection between the time-centered Factor 5 in Table 6-8 and Factor 4 in Table 6-7 is somewhat more tenuous, and it accounts for the least variance, too. Even so, however, the negative relationship between this factor and both board-focused activity and PTA involvement indicates that a sense of time commitment may stand quite independent of what is actually done.

A Further Typology

The factor analysis exercise described in the preceding section yielded interpretable modes of activity, but it requires a rather complicated procedure to transform this result from modes of activity to types of activists. We have chosen not to do this but instead to proceed in what, it is hoped, is a theoretically defensible but non-empirical fashion to develop still another typology of participants. Once that is done we can examine the characteristics of those who fall into each type. Our typology has not been developed entirely *a priori*, since we had some reasonably clear ideas of what the data would yield. The typology has been constructed by examining each of several behaviors that are generic to every institutional arena in which citizens participate. Obviously, we must therefore leave out much activity that is specific to schools, such as room sponsorship or PTA officership. What we have are putatively generic forms of participation undertaken by school activists in varying proportions. What categories do we find? What kinds of people are located in each?

First, we identify the *meeting goers*. We do this by dichotomizing the responses to the question of how many meetings respondents attend per month.

Those who attend three or less are put in one group, and those who attend four or more are in another group. Secondly, we separate those who are high in *contacting public officials* (Have you written a public official? Have you gone to see a public official?) from those who were low. The third activity mode was that of *Talker*, derived from answers to four questions concerning how often respondents discussed community, school, political or partisan affairs. Fourth, we identified *Electors* on the basis of whether the individual had participated in school elections or had worked in a partisan campaign. The other three participant types were derived from responses concerning involvement in voluntary organizations. Here again we dichotomized the responses and derived those who were *Members*, *Active Members*, and *Officers*.

It should be noted that there is a reasonably clear institutional basis for the seven-fold distinction offered here. Electors are active in one or more of the electoral arenas of the community. Contactors, for the most part, are active in relation to the decision-making officialdom, primarily at the local level. Talkers may very well remain outside decision-making circles to concentrate on the back fences. Organizational participants are found within the community's array of voluntary organizations. And meeting goers may take part in any or all of the others.

Let us consider the extent to which the seven types of participation are independent of each other. Table 6-9 provides a correlation matrix that helps answer the question. Some types of activity are quite closely related. If one is a member of organizations one goes to meetings. It might seem ironic that being an active member or an officer is *less* closely related to meeting going. It must be remembered, however, that while the respondents are all school activists the organizations involved in these

Table 6-9

Intercorrelations of Seven Types of Participation

	Meeting Goer	Talker	Cont.	Elector	Org. Mem.	Org. Act.	Org. Off.
Meeting Goer	1.00	.37	.43	.46	.67	.61	.54
Talker		1.00	.30	.35	-.17	-.15	-.07
Contacter			1.00	.27	-.24	-.13	-.19
Elector				1.00	-.30	-.18	-.20
Organization Member					1.00	.58	.42
Organization Activist						1.00	.51
Organization Officer							1.00

questions are not, for the most part, school-related. And it is reasonable that to some extent as one becomes more active in school affairs there is not a commensurate increase in non-school organization involvement. The relationship is not inverse but neither is it fully parallel.

It comes as no surprise that the three organization-related activity types are quite strongly intercorrelated. Nevertheless, it is instructive to note that the relationships are well short of unity. Some people may be multiple members but inactive; others may be intensely involved but within a narrow range of groups. The connections between membership, activism, and leadership of voluntary organizations need far greater understanding than we have now.[7]

The talkers, the contacters, and the electors are associated with each other, albeit rather weakly. It is interesting that all are negatively associated with those who are involved in organizational life, yet positively related to the meeting goers. We interpret the data as follows.

Meeting attendance is essentially a bridging form of participatory activity. Organizational people must attend meetings, but it turns out that talkers, contacters and electors also do, even though it may not be logically required of them. The organizational activists may, for many purposes, be regarded as a single grouping, though there are still some significant differences among the three levels of involvement.

Talkers, contacters and electors, however, are more sharply distinct from the others and from one another. Verba and Nie concluded that contacting and voting were distinct modes of participation, and our data suggest that they were correct. Even within a group of school activists there remains a significant distinction between the two.

The independence of the talkers cannot be compared with the Verba-Nie data since they did not ask about talking as such. It may seem curious that "mere talk" is not more strongly related, at least, to the elector group, since one might suppose that voting was a kind of threshhold variable vis-a-vis other, more "costly" modes of action. But it must be remembered that our electors are not merely voters but more active participants in the electoral arena. Nearly all of our respondents are regular voters. It is mainly the extra campaign participation that is differentiated from the other modes.

If we examine some of the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of our participation types we may discern the basis of a dynamic relationship among them. For ease of discussion we call the high side of each dichotomized variable the "Talkers," "Electors," or whatever. Talkers are younger than Electors or Contacters. Talkers are less well-educated, their income is lower, they have not lived in the community as long, nor have they been active as long. In all but one of these respects, Electors rank the highest with Contacters in between. It may be, therefore, that as participants get older and more experienced, and/or as they rise in status, they move from Talkers to Contacters and finally to the ranks of Electors. The last, of course, includes candidates for the school board, and in many respects constitutes a more intensively involved group than the others.

The relationships among these three groupings is not linear in all respects, however. Thus, on the question of how much impact school activity has had on the participant there is little difference among them. All three are quite strongly associated with the index of attentiveness, but Talkers show the strongest relationship. In this group we may have uncovered a distinguishable group of actively interested spectators who are biding their time before moving into more aggressive roles.

One form aggressiveness may take is to register specific complaints about what is going on. It is interesting, therefore, that Contacters had a substantially lower evaluation of the schools than did the other groups. This was true in four of the six individual communities, as well as in the aggregate. A cautious conclusion may be drawn, however, that insofar as Contacters are not simply intermediate between Talkers and Electors, but represent a distinct dimension of activity, it is the dimension of bitching about things.

There are some sharp differences among the six communities in the distribution of the seven modes of participation. Kirkwood ranks first on every measure, but it is much farther ahead regarding the organization-related modes, including meeting going, than it is in the more individualized modes of talking or contacting. Granite City, with apparently a comparatively modest organizational life, ranks quite high in talking and contacting.

Which is the more participant community? According to most social science theory Kirkwood would be clearly so, as its activism is embedded in an organized context that can give both focus and continuity to the concerns of its citizens. But Granite City's ad hoc participation modes may yield quite high rates of satisfaction on specific issues. Indeed, Granite City respondents were more positive than most in evaluating their school board and school administrators, and they ranked highest in their perception of their own influence on the schools.

Table 6-10

Mean Rates of Seven Modes of Participation, by Community

	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles
Meeting Goer	5.30	5.30	7.27	6.43	6.11	5.09
Elector	.41	.45	.73	.70	.41	.52
Contacter	.69	.77	.775	.62	.53	.59
Talker	.74	.81	.89	.82	.74	.77
Organization Member	3.17	2.71	4.75	3.80	2.38	2.57
Active Member	2.43	1.88	2.96	2.61	1.80	2.07
Officer	1.06	.80	1.90	1.25	1.05	1.48

A Concluding Note

These explorations into the modes of participation cannot be regarded as definitive. Different questions asked in different settings may uncover further variety, even as we have added dimensions to the Verba-Nie formulation. There is richness in the behavioral reality of citizen participation that has not by any means been fully tapped. At the same time, however, the findings of Verba and Nie, of Milbrath and his associates, and those presented here may give us confidence that the behavioral reality contains regularity and shape which can be appropriately rendered through use of the methods of social science research.

FOOTNOTES—CHAPTER 6

1. The literature on participation in voluntary associations has grown enormously in recent years, much of it following the establishment of the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars under the leadership of sociologist David Horton Smith. Assessments of the rates and correlates of organizational participation have greatly increased in both number and complexity. In addition to sources cited in earlier chapters the work of Herbert Hyman and Charles Wright should certainly be noted. See their second major essay, "Trends in Voluntary Association Memberships of American Adults: Replication Based on Secondary Analysis of National Sample Surveys," *American Sociological Review*, volume 36 (April, 1971), pp. 191-206.

2. Robert E. Lane, *Political Life*, New York: The Free Press, 1959.

3. See the summary of the literature on party activists in James Q. Wilson, *Political Organizations*, New York: Basic Books, 1973, Chapter 6. This particular point was developed in my own article, "The Urban Party Organization Member," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 29 (Winter, 1965-1966), pp. 550-564.

4. This research is summarized in Lester W. Milbrath and M. L. Grel, *Political Participation*, 2nd edition, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1977.

5. School elections are analyzed with thoroughness in two recent volumes: Philip K. Piele and John Stuart Hall, *Budgets, Bonds and Ballots*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973; and Howard D. Hamilton and Sylvan H. Cohen, *Policy-Making by Plebiscite: School Referenda*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1974.

6. For a preliminary report on this cross-national research see Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie and Jae-On Kim, *The Modes of Democratic Participation: A Cross-National Comparison*, Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1971.

7. For further discussion of this problem see my paper, "Overlapping Memberships, Organizational Interactions and Interest Group Theory," presented to the American Political Science Association, September, 1976.

CHAPTER 7

The Significance of Office

In most organizations the identity and orientations of the leadership are matters of great importance. In part this is because leaders may exercise some degree of power over the members, giving shape to organizational objectives, allocating resources both within and outside the group, and representing it in dealing with the external world. From another angle, leaders are important for what they represent about the organization and its larger context. If a particular elite displays certain social or economic characteristics, we often infer things about the organization that elite controls. Further, the processes by which leaders are recruited and through which power is exercised and legitimized are significant beyond what they reveal about any particular set of individuals, since as those processes continue to operate they will govern whatever circulation of and adaptation among an organization's elite can occur.

A great many studies of organizations and their leaders have focused on the differences between leaders and non-leaders, differences in social background, values, motivations, and styles of action.[1] Thus, they are concerned implicitly or explicitly with the impact of the leadership on the activities and values of the organization. But they have seldom investigated the impact of holding leadership positions upon the leaders themselves. It might generally be supposed that, compared to the back bencher, the experience of exercising leadership will be relatively intense. Leaders may be expected to devote more time, energy and attention to the tasks of the organization and probably to have stronger emotional ties to it as well. As a consequence we would expect them to perceive a greater effect, more change in themselves, as a result of the participatory experiences of holding office. Since we are especially interested in the impact of school participation on the participant, we want to give particular attention to this matter of impact of leadership experience on the individual.

In this study we are able to examine social background data, recruitment processes and impact for several quite distinct sets of citizen leaders of school organizations. These groups represent varying degrees of leadership potential, primarily resulting from variation in the amount of influence the office might be expected to confer on its occupant. They also represent differences in the likely intensity of the experience. As we have noted in the previous sections of this report, there is a strong relationship between the level or amount of activity and the impact of that activity on the individual participant. Similarly, here we would expect to find that the more demanding the school leadership position was, the greater the impact it would have. Moreover, we would expect as well to discern qualitative differences in the effect of holding one type of office as compared to another.

We proceeded by first asking respondents whether they had ever held office in a school-related organization. Sixty-five percent answered affirmatively. This left 149 individuals who had not held office. This group we label our "backbenchers." A second set consists of those who indicated they had held office in a parent-teacher organization. Forty-two percent (214) claimed this status. For some purposes we have broken this group further into those who had held only one office (94) and those who held more than one (120). The latter group presumably would have felt more intensively whatever leadership potential was contained in PTA experiences. PTA officers were asked some additional questions specifically designed to probe that experience.

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Another group of school participants to whom a special set of questions was addressed consisted consisted of forty-seven persons who had served on citizens committees appointed to deal with some particular problem or issue respecting the schools in their community. Some of those people had previously been active in school affairs. Others had not but were nevertheless prominent in the community. Still others were newly brought into citizen activity by this appointment. Although the members of the citizens committees did not technically hold formal organizational office, in nearly every case this committee position was of sufficient prominence and they devoted such time and energy to the task that they may quite properly be called school leaders.

The final group of leaders is composed of sixty-two people who had recently been candidates for their local school boards. Nineteen of this group had lost their campaigns and so had never actually experienced office. But the defeated candidates had campaigned very nearly as vigorously as the winners, and in their responses to questions about the impact of the campaign on their perspectives towards school and community they made it plain that the experience had been relatively intense. Moreover, it does not seem at all unreasonable to regard evun the losing candidates as occupying positions of leadership, at least for the duration of the campaign, within the overall system of action we refer to in thinking about public school affairs.

Our three leadership positions differ in the degree of personal commitment they demand. PTA office often requires relatively little effort either to acquire the position or to serve in it. A single term in such a position is unlikely to change the way one views the world. Frequently, there is a kind of rotation of those who are willing through a sequence of offices, from third vice-president through president, serving one year in each, but seldom experiencing more than routine functions. There might be some cumulative effect from successive terms, however, even in essentially powerless positions. Membership on a citizens committee or candidacy for the school board, on the other hand, are never routine, and while the committees are usually only advisory, school board members possess a certain amount of genuine power to make decisions and allocate resources. We expect, therefore, to find that in general leaders will report a greater impact from school involvement than do nonleaders. We expect that citizens committee members and school board candidates will experience more impact than PTA officers.

Following the well-established argument that elites are more likely than non-elites to be composed of the advantaged elements of a society, we expect to find that socio-economic profiles of the backbenchers, PTA officers, committee members and board candidates differ, with the more prominent leadership roles filled by people of higher status. And we also expect that the more significant the leadership positions, the more deeply rooted its occupants will be in the community. We turn now to examine these and other questions against the data.

School Leaders--Demographic Profiles

School participation, as we have noted, tends to be dominated by women. But school leaders are much less often women. As Table 7-1 shows, the more substantial the leadership position the higher the proportion of men. The data are striking, but the interpretation is not quite as simple as it appears. If one controls for the level of school activity in each of the three leaders groups it turns out that in each one men are more prominent at the lowest level, and the proportion of women is higher at

Table 7-1

Sex Distribution Among School Leaders

	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Men	13.4%	27.4%	53.2%	83.1%
Women	86.6	72.6	46.8	16.9

each successive level of involvement. That is, among the PTA officers who are highly active, women are more prominent than among the more reflexive officers. It appears therefore that although men occupy a disproportionate place in the school participation elite they tend to do so rather routinely and thus leave more room than might be expected to the really activist women.

Next we compare the four sets of participants with regard to education and income. Table 7-2 and 7-3 present the data, and they show that there is a strong advantage for the relatively better educated and higher income sectors in obtaining the higher leadership positions, although they do not seem to affect achievement of PTA offices. It should be remembered, of course, that our respondents as a set rank far above national means for socio-economic status, and that even those in the "Low" categories are not

Table 7-2

Education Level of School Leaders

Education Level	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Low	51.0%	40.0%	29.82%	16.9%
Medium	38.3	45.6	38.3	40.7
High	10.7	14.4	31.9	42.4

Table 7-3

Income Level of School Leaders

Income Level	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Low	35.4%	34.0%	11.4%	6.9%
Medium	43.5	45.1	47.7	43.1
High	21.1	20.9	40.9	50.0

part of the lower class. Nevertheless, it is instructive to observe how much advantage is derived from high education and income in seeking a place in the school participation elite.

Finally, we may note that, as one would expect, leaders are somewhat older than non-leaders. Table 7-4 presents the data and again we observe a sharp difference between PTA officers, who do not differ from backbenchers, and the other leadership groups. Indeed, we may conclude that there really is not very much demographic difference between the PTA officers and those who have not yet held such office. It appears that there is enough automaticity of rotation and/or the positious of PTA leaders are sufficiently powerless to wipe out most of the expected status differential.

Table 7-4

Age Distribution of School Leaders

Age	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
40 & under	68.2%	66.0%	46.8%	28.8%
41 & above	31.8	34.0	53.2	71.2

School Leaders in their Communities

We turn next to consider how school leaders are positioned in their respective communities. Our expectation is that leaders will be more deeply lodged in the community than backbenchers. That is, they will have lived there longer, and they will have been more active in other kinds of community organizations as well as in the schools. Table 7-5 shows that the first of these expectations is borne out by the data. Moreover, the "higher" the leadership position the longer the length of residence. Over half of the school board candidates have lived in the community more than fifteen years. A predominantly suburban sample might have been expected to reflect more population transiency, but it will be recalled from Chapter 3 that these participants all tend to be geographically stable. Even among the backbenchers, over half have lived in the community for seven or more years.

Table 7-5

School Leaders and Length of Residence

Length of Residence	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizens Committee Members	School Board Candidates
1-3 years	18.2%	11.2%	6.4%	1.7%
4-6	24.3	16.7	12.8	5.2
7-10	21.6	25.4	25.5	22.4
11-15	16.9	19.5	12.8	12.1
15+	18.9	27.4	42.6	58.6

Next we consider the degree of organizational involvement of leaders and non-leaders, utilizing the composite index of involvement introduced earlier, composed of membership, activity and office-holding in seventeen different categories of organizations. We might argue that leaders, by virtue of their office, will encounter more organizational situations in which to become involved. Alternatively, it may be that being active already in other groups enhances the likelihood that a person will be selected, or select him- or herself, for a school leadership role. Either way, the relationship between leadership position and organizational involvement would be positive. On the other hand, office might impose constraints, and foreclose options. If so, it might be that school leaders were, for lack of time or interest, less active elsewhere. Table 7-6 makes it clear that the first hypothesis is generally valid. Leaders are more deeply involved than non-leaders. (Later in this chapter we will examine membership of these leadership groups in specific types of organizations.) And, generally, the positions of higher responsibility draw people who are more extensively involved elsewhere. The relationship is more complex than expected, however.

Table 7-6

School Leaders and Organizational Involvement

Organizational Involvement	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Low	28.1%	16.7%	6.4%	8.5%
Low-Medium	31.5	27.0	17.0	20.3
Medium-High	17.4	23.7	12.8	22.0
High	23.0	32.6	63.8	49.2

PTA officers, whether they have had many offices within the organization or just one, are not so very much more active, and what difference there is between them and backbenchers is accounted for by their greater length of residence. Members of citizens committees are more active than board candidates. It is entirely reasonable, of course, to find that in recruiting members of advisory committees a prime source of appropriate people would be the ranks of organizationally active residents of the community. But we must qualify the general proposition and note that the relationship between school leadership position and organizational involvement is not a simple one.

Let us look at the extent to which individuals engage in personal and individual activities, separated from a specific working context of formal organizations, that are designed to influence civic affairs; such things as calling officials about a problem, or writing letters to editors or officials. Here the relationship is quite straightforward. As Table 7-7 shows, officers are far more active than backbenchers. PTA officers do more, and, in turn, those who held more than one PTA office did still more. Citizens committee members and board candidates were far more active than either set of PTA officers. It would seem, then, that while there are some constraints of office, there is an undoubted and strong tendency for those who are active, both personally and organizationally, to occupy the higher

Table 7-7

School Leaders and Personal Activity

Personal Activity	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizens Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Low	27.5%	11.6%	6.4%	0.0%
Medium-Low	33.6	20.9	2.1	10.2
Medium-High	27.1	33.5	27.7	28.8
High	16.8	34.0	63.8	61.0

rungs of responsibility in school affairs as well.

Interestingly, there is very little difference among the several groups of leaders and between them and the non-leaders regarding involvement in partisan politics. On our index of partisan involvement, built from items that included strength of party identification, other attitudes about party conflict, interest in and discussion of partisan questions, only the school board candidates displayed even a slightly greater concern (Gamma = .20). It should be noted, however, that even though school activists are not active partisans, almost half of the citizens committee members and board candidates belong to political organizations, and even PTA officers are much more likely to belong to them than backbenchers. Apparently, therefore, school leaders carry out their greater organizational involvement in the political realm but do so without very much passion.

Finally, let us look at the level of interest in and attention to public affairs by school organization leaders. Here we use an index which includes in it items on the interest in public affairs and the extent of use of the mass media. Again, as Table 7-8 shows, there is a striking difference between leaders and non-leaders, and among the leaders between

Table 7-8

School Leaders and Attentiveness

Attentiveness	Backbenchers	PTA Officers	Citizens Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Low	29.1%	11.1%	12.2%	5.3%
Medium-Low	34.9	28.4	10.6	11.9
Medium-High	24.2	32.1	40.4	42.4
High	12.8	28.4	46.8	42.4

the two groups who seem to be part of the real community elite and those, the PTA officers, who are not.

Our discussion thus far has ignored whatever differences there may be among the six communities of our study. Because of the small numbers involved in each leader group within a given community we are forced to merge the three types of school officers into a single set in order to compare them to non-leaders. In virtually no case is there any departure within a particular community from a general direction of the patterns we have identified for the whole set. That is, officers are older, richer, better educated, longer resident, more active, more attentive, and so on. Some communities display these differences more dramatically than others, however.

In Ladue, officers are just barely distinguishable in terms of socio-economic profile or length of residence from non-officers. We have already had occasion to note that school participation in this wealthy, problem-free community generally has a passive, routine character to it. It seems that this extends to the selection of officers also. They are just about like the others. Even so, however, once in office the school leaders in this community report as much impact and reveal as much difference from non-leaders in levels of activity as those in other districts. Two interpretations are possible, and without longitudinal data we cannot determine which is valid. One is that holding school office generates broader community involvement. The other, and more likely, is that in a wealthy community like this, higher socio-economic status is not a prerequisite to leadership selection but extensive organizational and personal involvement in the community is.

In the communities that have experienced substantial recent influxes of new residents, St. Charles and Normandy, there were especially large differences,and in the expected direction, between leaders and non-leaders in such characteristics as age, education, and length of residence. Whether these differences relate to the threshold of expectations regarding what constitutes a sufficient apprenticeship in the community prior to holding office, or to a threshold of inclination regarding the point at which people are willing to present themselves for consideration as candidates, we cannot say. It is probably of some importance in St. Charles, especially, however, that with so many issues dividing old residents from new, the leaders of school groups are drawn from the "old settlers." Community differences do not seem to appear regarding organizational involvement or personal activity. In every community, leaders display greater rates of activity than non-leaders. So we may wish to conclude that those latter considerations constitute thresholds pretty much regardless of the particularities of the individual community.

All of our measures indicate substantially greater involvement in the community on the part of the organizational leaders than for backbenchers, and in virtually every case there is a further difference between PTA officers on the one hand, and the two elite sets, citizens committees members and school board candidates, on the other. We must still ask what it means. One hypothesis would claim that it is the greater involvement on a broad front that gives advantage to some citizens who then utilize the resources of an extensive network of acquaintance and recognition to secure school leadership position.

An alternative, which is less purposeful but still within the same broad interpretive framework, would see the process of elevation to positions of leadership in any sector of community life as largely a matter of probabilities. Once a set of people permit themselves to be chosen by entering the arena of school activity at all, and all the respondents in this study had done this much at least, whether one was tapped for higher position or was motivated to seek it would, in this view, be a probabilistic question in which the chances would depend on the frequency of contact with other citizens in various contexts and situations. There are exceptions, of course, but in the aggregate it is surely true that people who belong to several organizations will be more widely acquainted and therefore more likely to be thought of for committee service than people who belong to few. In short, community involvement represents both an active resource, something that can be called upon, and a passive resource as well wherein "they" are more likely to call upon you.

From still another perspective it may be said that community involvement and school leadership both represent a degree of personal commitment, of caring, and that both forms of action may emanate from a set of personal values which propelled the leadership cadres in every area of community life to take more vigorous part and thus eventually to reach leadership position. On this point we have some direct evidence. It will be recalled that we asked respondents if they felt a particular sense of duty regarding participation in school affairs. There was virtually no difference at all among the groups of school leaders or between them and the non-leaders in this response. Thus, the answer to our question is no.

It is possible, and from our data we cannot tell, that there are quite different patterns of connection between community involvement and leadership role for the three sets of leaders. Thus it might be that citizens committee members tend to become active in the community first and then are coopted into school activity on the basis of their prominence. School board candidates, on the other hand, may seek organizational participation more instrumentally, hoping to make use of the resources derived from broad involvement. PTA officers, after they have held several PTA positions, may acquire additional organizational involvement as they move up through the system of school participation. In order to assess these arguments it is really necessary to view school leadership positions as existing in a dynamic context of time. People are brought into leadership roles, quite often from earlier roles as backbenchers, and they go on to other activities later on. We do not have all the data we need, given the cross-sectional nature of our study, but we can throw some light on the process by which school leaders are recruited and what they plan for their future. To that we now turn.

Recruitment and Related Processes

What we have said about school leaders thus far indicates that the pool of potential leaders ranks somewhat higher on scales of socio-economic status and of interest in school affairs as well as being more deeply involved in their respective communities. We can identify two other closely related factors that appear to play a part in the process by which prospective leaders are selected out from the group of school activists. One factor is that they have been involved in school affairs for a longer time. Table 7-9 indicates that, although the relationships are not as strong as those with length of residence in the community, the elite officers at least have been involved considerably longer. Even the citizens committee members who include quite a few people not previously active in school affairs are in the aggregate comparative veterans in school participation.

The other factor to note is that school leaders have more children than backbenchers. In all but one community, the mean number of children for officers exceeded that for non-officers. Inasmuch as school participants

Table 7-9

Length of School Involvement of School Leaders

Length of Involvement	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
0-2 years	22.1%	14.9%	8.5%	10.2%
3-5 years	18.1	23.3	23.4	15.3
6-9 years	27.5	24.2	23.4	11.9
10-14 years	16.1	20.5	19.1	22.0
15+	16.1	17.2	25.5	40.7

so often take part when their children attend school, it is reasonable to expect that having more children will lead to longer involvement, and this, in turn, will increase the likelihood of moving into the ranks of school leadership.

The actual processes of recruitment were probed by asking directly how the individual came to hold office and why they wanted to, or agreed to, serve. PTA officers overwhelmingly (93%) replied that they had been asked by others, either by formal nomination or informally. Only 2.3% said they had volunteered. However, nearly half of those who were asked to serve said they were quite willing, so that there appears to be a combination of individual interest and cooptation that works to maintain the annual supply of elected PTA officers. And the substantial amount of explicit desire for office would suggest that the organizations are able to count on enthusiasm in their leadership. Only 7.9% said that they had accepted as a last resort because no one else could be found. Since volunteer organizations can never be certain that there will be sufficient ambition for advancement among their members to fill the ranks of leadership, this finding should be encouraging.

It must be noted that we do not know how many members would like to become leaders and were left out because no one asked them. Nor do we know how many were asked and refused. All we can say is that a sufficient supply of willing people was found, most of whom, as our previous discussion has shown, were only marginally different from their backbencher friends.

Citizen committee members are quite substantially different from nonleaders, and they are recruited by a rather different process, or set of processes. Almost two-thirds (63.8%) were appointed, while 19% volunteered. The appointment process, while possibly cooptative, could seldom operate in a manner equivalent to the nomination of PTA officers since the citizens committee members were not drawn from a single organization's roster of members but from the whole community. The issue then was not only whom to select but on the basis of what criterion.

We asked directly why people thought they had been named. Nearly one-fourth did not know. But 23.4 percent indicated that their prior school-related activity had been the main reason for their selection. An additional 14.9 percent said that their interest in school matters was the crucial factor.

A few (6.4%) said that community activity led to their appointment. Some fifteen percent thought that some aspect of their personal skills was thought to be of particular importance or usefulness to the committee's work. And 10.6 percent were named because they were thought to represent something important: an area, a social group, or a point of view.

Thus, there would appear to be two broad sources of committee members. One group is drawn from the school enthusiasts and one is chosen for reasons having to do with either their personal qualities or their place in the community. Undoubtedly, there is considerable overlapping of characteristics; enthusiasts may also be representative or possess special skills, while the others may sometimes be actively involved in school affairs.

Nevertheless, there are differences between the two groups that appear to be related to the differences in recruitment process. The enthusiast group was marginally more enthusiastic about the accomplishments of the committee itself and reported a considerably greater impact on themselves resulting from their specific committee service. The skill/representative group was more resentful of the time they spent on the committee and generally seemed to regard it as more of a chore. Even so, however, the latter group, which was less active in school affairs generally, was more affected by their having become involved in school affairs. That is, they scored higher on the overall index of impact from school involvement, though lower with reference to the committee work itself. Thus it would appear that the participatory experience did have an effect on the skill/representative group's general outlook on the schools even though they didn't think much of the committee's specific accomplishments.

School board candidates are much more likely to be self-starters. Some 44.4 percent indicated that it was their own idea to run, a much larger proportion than for any of the other groups of leaders. Moreover, a majority expressed purposive intentions in seeking, or agreeing, to run. They had ideas, of varying degrees of specificity, concerning how the schools of their community might be made better. One-fourth of the board candidates said they possessed specific personal skills which they felt would contribute to sound school policy, and named this as the most important factor leading them to seek election. In general, it appears that candidates for school board enter into that status much more as a result of individual, even idiosyncratic, desires and circumstances, less dependent on processes of cooptation or sponsorship and less shaped by the social or organizational context than is true of the other sets of school leaders.

The Future

We have seen in an earlier chapter that school activists not only begin their involvement upon their oldest children's entry into school but, for the most part, remain active only as long as they still have children enrolled. Table 7-10 shows the responses to the question of how much longer each category of officers expected to remain in school affairs. Some of the answers were uninterpretable and have been placed in the "other" category, but in general the leadership elite seems plainly to have a longer future commitment to school activity than do the "lower ranks."

Table 7-10

How Much Longer Do You Expect to be Active?

How Much Longer	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Until children are out of school	74.5%	62.2%	29.8%	16.9%
Indefinitely	14.8	23.8	51.1	49.2
Other, not sure	10.7	14.0	19.1	31.9

There was only a slightly greater tendency for leaders to express an intention to enter into other kinds of organized activity once they were no longer involved, and not much difference among the three groups of leaders. There was some variation in this respect among communities. In Ladue, for instance, officers were much more inclined to continue in organizational life, a finding which is compatible with our earlier observation that the school leaders in that community were distinguished by their especially strong organizational involvement. For the group as a whole, there was considerable difference in the specific kinds of activity respondents looked forward to undertaking. The elite leaders were more likely to select civic or political work while the backbenchers and, to a lesser extent, the PTA officers tended to pick more private pursuits, such as family, school, or work. Thus, insofar as school activism leads to later civic participation, it does so mainly for those who have occupied elite positions within the school participation system.

The Impact of School Activity

At various points along the way we have noted that the impact of school participation on the individual is strongly related to the intensity and scope of involvement. Consequently, it is not surprising to find this to be true also among school leaders; that is, the higher the level of school involvement, the stronger the impact. Table 7-11 reports the data using the composite index of impact discussed earlier. When we examine the individual items that make up the index, however, a more complex picture

Table 7-11

Impact of Participation on School Leaders

Impact	Backbenchers	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Low	23.6%	11.6%	8.5%	8.5%
Medium	46.6	48.8	40.4	20.3
High	29.8	39.5	51.1	71.2

emerges. School board candidates were considerably more conscious of the time they had spent and felt with a sharper pain than the others that they had paid a price for their involvement. Citizen Committee members, on the other hand, were more likely than the other groups to report that participation had changed their thinking.

The impact of participation upon officers varied from one community to another. In Kirkwood there was no difference between leaders and non-leaders. In that relatively intense setting nearly everyone experienced a high level of impact. In Granite City, also, but probably for the opposite reasons, there was little difference among groups in the generally low level of impact. Officership made the most difference in Normandy, where 52.5 percent of the officers reported high impact and only 12.5 percent of the backbenchers did so. This seems to provide further testimony to the importance of participation in overcoming the anomic effects of a fragmented community structure.

The Impact of Office

We have spoken thus far only of the general impact of school activity as represented by the impact index. We also asked specifically of each group whether they thought their efforts had accomplished something. In the case of PTA officers and citizen committee members the efforts referred to were the actual service in the organization. Board candidates, however, included both winners and losers. Therefore we asked about the experiential common denominator, the campaign for office. The basic results are presented in Table 7-12. It is interesting to observe that PTA officers, who display less sense of the overall impact of school activity on themselves (Table 7-11, above), and who have, as we will develop in a subsequent section, a rather pessimistic view in general of the usefulness of citizen action, nevertheless are more likely to feel their specific leadership service was of consequence than the other leadership groups.

Probes of these perceptions of accomplishment were conducted for each of the three groups.[3] First of all, we may note that there was only rather modest variation among the six communities with regard to perception of accomplishment. A slightly higher negative reaction was reported in Granite City, and PTA officers were a bit more enthusiastic in Normandy. In general, however, all six were quite similar.

Table 7-12

Perceived Accomplishment of Leadership Experience

Accomplishment	PTA Officers	Citizen Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Yes	80.5%	70.2%	73.8%
No	12.1	23.4	23.0
Mixed--not sure	6.5	4.3	1.6

There was considerable diversity in the explanations given for the sense of accomplishment. They are summarized for PTA officers in Table 7-13. By way of contrast, one-fourth of the Citizens Committee members

Table 7-13

Types of Accomplishments Perceived by PTA Officers

Self-Improvement	7.5%
Increased Understanding by Others	8.9
Specific School Program Change	13.1
Money Raised	19.2
Generalized	29.1
NA	22.1

identified specific school-centered accomplishments resulting from their work and an additional 10.6 percent cited generalized school improvements. Board candidates could not so easily identify substantive accomplishments since they were commenting only on the campaign rather than official service. Nevertheless, 26.2 percent noted that issues had been raised and some 11.5 percent more mentioned having increased the information stock and/or moral alternatives ("I did what was right!") available to the community. The sense of accomplishment was especially strong among board candidates in Kirkwood.

For all three groups of leaders the sense of accomplishment was strongly related to the amount of time and effort invested. Board candidates reported on how much they had campaigned; citizens committee members reported on how much time they had spent on the committee; PTA officers reported on how many offices they had held. The results are summarized in Table 7-14. On the other hand, there was no relationship between educational background and a sense of accomplishment, nor with the amount of organizational involvement in the community. Thus, background and contextual factors were not as important in determining whether a school leader felt that something had been

Table 7-14

Amount of Effort and Sense of Accomplishment

Accomplishment	PTA Officers Effort		Citizens Committee Members Effort		Board Candidates Effort	
	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Yes	84.2%	75.5%	78.6%	57.9%	88.2%	55.6%
No	8.3	17.0	17.9	31.5	11.8	37.0
Not Sure, NA	7.5	7.4	3.6	10.5	---	7.4

accomplished as the amount of specific effort invested. Some differences could be noted between citizens committee members who had prior involvement with school-related activities (77.8 percent perceived some accomplishment) and those for whom the primary factor in leading to their appointment was their skill or representative capacity (68.8 percent yes). Also, board candidates who won (82.1 percent) were more likely to feel their campaign accomplished something than those who lost (66.7 percent). Even so, however, heavy majorities in both groups reported positive achievements, and the factors of time and effort seem most strongly responsible.

As we would expect, therefore, there is a strong relationship between our overall summary index of school activity and the sense of accomplishment. Table 7-15 presents the results. In the case of PTA officers, where the number is big enough to permit a finer breakdown of the amount of office-holding, the relationship is even stronger (Gamma = .498) between the number of offices held and the perception of accomplishment.

Table 7-15

School Activity Level and Sense of Accomplishment

Percent Perceiving Accomplishment	Activity Level		
	Low	Medium	High
PTA Officers	70.6%	75.6%	85.6%
Citizens Committee Members	88.9	53.8	72.0
Board Candidates	36.4	64.7	90.9

On the other hand, our summary measure of impact from school activity in general is more weakly related to accomplishment, as a comparison of Table 7-16 with Table 7-15 will quickly show. Similarly, when the number of PTA positions is used as a measure of intensity of involvement the Gamma

Table 7-16

Impact of School Activity and Sense of Accomplishment

Percent Perceiving Accomplishment	Impact Level Low	 Medium	 High
PTA Officers	76.0%	78.1%	40.0%
Citizens Committee Members	50.0	73.7	64.3
Board Members	40.0	64.3	81.0

is only .12. From this we conclude, sensibly enough, that it is the leadership experience specifically that leads to a sense of accomplishment rather than the effects of a more generalized activism.

Having said this we must now turn to examine the perceived impact on the individual resulting specifically from leadership experience. We asked whether the respondent saw things differently regarding the schools as a result of his or her experience as a PTA officer, citizens committee member, or school board candidate, as the case might be. PTA officers and board candidates reported considerably less impact in their outlook than citizens committee members; 58.6 percent and 43.5 percent respectively, as compared to 70.2 percent for citizens committee members. With regard to PTA officers there was again a marked difference (Gamma = .35) between those who had held only one office and those who held more than one. Two-thirds of the latter felt that they had been affected and twice as many of the group specifically noted changes in their evaluative attitudes respecting schools and community. Interpretation of the comparatively low level of impact on board candidate attitudes is difficult. It may be that the candidates tended to campaign more than they realized among like-minded people while citizens committee members worked willy-nilly with people of diverse points of view.

Or perhaps board candidates were more firmly fixed in their attitudes prior to the campaign and hence had less inclination to change.

Attitude change was more prevalent in the two communities where generally we have found the greatest impact from school involvement to have been felt: Kirkwood, struggling to achieve racial balance, and Normandy, trying to overcome the effects of twenty-three separate municipalities. Conversely, impact was low in Ladue.

Sheer amount of time spent did not appear closely related to impact. Education was not related in a consistent way, nor was organizational involvement. Again, however, overall level of school activity was related to impact and so was the amount of activity specific to the leadership role. Of those who campaigned hard for school board positions, 82.9 percent felt the experience had had a significant impact as against 60 percent of those who did not campaign hard. And, as Table 7-17 shows, the relationship to overall activity level is striking for board candidates and PTA officers.

Table 7-17

Effect of General Level of School Activity on Personal Impact of Leadership Experience

Percent Reporting Impact	Level of School Activity Low	Medium	High
PTA Officers	29.4%	52.9%	67.6%
Citizens Committee Members	66.7	69.2	72.0
Board Candidates	27.3	41.2	70.6

The comparative weakness of the relationship of overall school activity level to impact among citizen committee members may be due to the diversity in background of that group. As we have noted previously, many members of those committees were appointed not so much because of their interest in school affairs as for reasons of technical knowledge (law, finance) or group representation. And this group reported a distinctly lower sense of personal impact (50 percent v. 50 percent) than those who had previously cultivated an interest in the schools (88.9 percent v. 11.1 percent). Apparently, the generalized impact of this kind of experience is greater when it fails upon already prepared ground. At the same time, however, the relatively high impact of specific committee service among the citizens groups is in keeping with our other findings that more intense participation experiences have important effects on how the world of that experience is seen.

We asked a third type of question regarding the impact of leadership experience; namely, whether it had resulted in their seeing their community differently. Results are displayed in Table 7-18. Here, unlike the finding concerning attitudes toward the schools, board candidates experienced the greatest change. Moreover, candidates who campaigned hard were more than twice as likely to perceive their community differently than those who did not run hard. This is certainly consistent with the expectation that a school board candidate would much more actively venture forth into the

Table 7-18

Impact of Leadership Experience on Perception of Community

	PTA Officers	Citizens Committee Members	School Board Candidates
Some impact	31.2%	29.8%	43.5%
No impact	67.0	68.1	56.5
Mixed, NA	.9	2.1	---

community seeking support than members of the other two groups who did not require such support. PTA officers who had held several offices, for example, had still not gone beyond the bounds of the organization, and they were not appreciably more likely to report a different sense of the community than those who had held only one office. For all three groups, time spent on school matters as such bore no relation to the likelihood of changing one's view of the community. We may also note that general organizational involvement was unrelated to reported change in community evaluation. This might seem surprising since if one belongs to more organizations rather than fewer one would expect thereby to acquire increased familiarity with the community and quite possibly change one's opinion about it. The point, however, is whether school leadership as such had had such an effect. General organizational involvement might quite reasonably be unconnected to that specific relationship.

There was a positive relationship between educational level and changed perception of the community. And for the PTA officers and the school board candidates there was a strong positive connection between both the general level of school activity and its personal impact, on the one hand, and changed view of the community, on the other. Interestingly, quite a bit of this change was negative, either as a broad judgment about the community or as a comparison of one's particular neighborhood (good) with the rest of the area (bad), which was now better known to the respondent.

One final item should be reported. School board candidates were asked two questions about the impact their campaigning had upon them. One, which we have already discussed, asked about the effect on the candidate's perception of the schools. The other asked about the impact on the candidate's own life. Table 7-19 shows that not only did most candidates feel a sub-

Table 7-19

The Impact of Campaigning on Candidates

Amount of Impact	Campaigned Less	Campaigned More	Row Total	
Very	37.0%	68.6%	54.8%	N = 34
Some	18.5	14.3	16.1	N = 10
Not Much	14.8	5.7	9.6	N = 6
None	29.6	11.4	19.4	N = 12
	(N = 27)	(N = 35)		

stantial effect, but also those who campaigned harder felt the effects more strongly.

There was considerable variety in the kinds of effects campaigning had. One-fourth of the candidates reported an essentially personal impact, either in building self-confidence (6.5%) or in exacting personal sacrifice (17.7%). Another group emphasized their own expanded understanding of schools (4.8%) or community (14.5%). Perhaps the most interesting item was the 27.4% who identified an enhanced appreciation of the electoral process and what it means to solicit voter support.

One final note: those who lost their races reported a somewhat greater impact than those who won. Moreover, among the winners the major impact was in tha area of personal sacrifices while for the losers the greatest impact was in the enlarged understanding of the community. Apparently, a campaign is more of an educational process for those who are defeated, but, ironically, more of a pain for those who win.

Interorganizational Connections

We are interested in the interconnections among organizations in the community and the extent to which school participants are tied into some groups or clusters of groups rather than others. One aspect of this interest relates to the differences among the three sets of school officers and between officers and backbenchers. Table 7-20 displays data on the propor-

Table 7-20

Members in Community Organizations of Four Groups of School Participants

Type of Organization	Back-benchers	PTA Officers	Citizens Committee Members	Board Candidates
Labor Union	5.9%	7.4%	14.9%	15.3%
Fraternal	13.2	10.2	36.2	35.6
Sports	15.8	25.6	38.3	35.6
Political	7.2	21.9	48.9	44.1
Veterans	2.6	3.3	17.9	18.6
Youth	55.9	60.9	59.6	54.2
Professional	16.4	20.0	42.6	42.4
Service	17.1	24.2	34.0	37.3
Business	13.5	9.3	31.9	30.5
Hobby	12.5	12.1	34.0	13.6
Farm	3.3	3.7	0.0	1.7
Literary & Discussion	6.6	12.6	10.6	10.2
School Fraternity	11.8	21.4	21.3	25.4
Nationality	3.9	7.0	0.0	10.2
Church	63.8	65.6	74.5	71.2
Special Cause	11.5	8.8	14.9	25.4
Others	19.4	18.1	27.7	18.6

tion of each group belonging to one or more organizations in each of seventeen categories. A number of interesting points emerge. To a very substantial extent the leadership groups are more active organizationally than the backbenchers, a fact we already knew from Table 7-6, wherein the composite index of organizational involvement shows a much higher score for officers and higher for board candidates and citizens committee members than for PTA officers. Now we can observe, however, that this difference is far more marked for some kinds of groups than for others. All school participants, leaders and non-leaders, belong to youth groups and church groups in about the same high proportions. On the other hand, there are striking differences in the political category and among fraternal orders, veterans groups, professional, service, and business organizations. Part of these differences is surely due to the fact that among the committee members and board candidates there is a far higher proportion of men and men are more likely to be members of most of these kinds of groups, especially in the professional and business categories. But men do not predominate among PTA officers and in a number of categories, including political, sports, service and school fraternity organizations, these officers too are much more likely to belong than the backbenchers. In literary and study organizations women are more likely to belong than men and yet school officers belong to these in disproportionate numbers.

We interpret these data as follows. Some kinds of organizations are threshold groups which attract large numbers of people who possess some minimum level of inclination to participate in community affairs, but which do not constitute staging areas for individuals who seek to move up to more intensive participation. Other kinds of organizations, however, provide a context of social contacts, experience, information and perhaps even habits of activity that propel participants into more intense modes of action. In other words, belonging to a church or youth group leads to nothing more than minimum participation. Belonging to political or professional groups, on the other hand, goes hand-in-hand with rising to officer status in school groups and, possibly, vice versa.

We cannot know from these data exactly where school participation fits. Other parts of our analysis suggest that there is some modest flow through time from school participation into other types of organizations. This in turn encourages us to identify two distinct kinds of interorganizational connections. One is characterized by a temporal sequence, going from one thing to the next as personal situation and needs change. The other is characterized by more or less simultaneous mutual reinforcement of several types of participation, each of which supports the other and renders it more likely to happen. The latter situation we would expect to be especially operative with respect to the recruitment of elite level leaders, some of whom would be identified by other participants in this organizational context and put forward for preferment, while others would simply "get the idea" themselves from being so much a part of an active organizational network and therefore become self-starting. Table 7-20 suggests that the professional-fraternal-service-veterans-business-political cluster serves this leadership recruitment function and quite probably does so not only for school organizations but for many others as well.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER 7

1. A comprehensive recent review of the voluminous literature bearing upon leadership may be found in Ralph Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, New York: Free Press, 1975.

2. We do not report the statistical strengths of association in this or other tables in this chapter. Although for many purposes the four groups of respondents appear to be arrayed in linear fashion, from low leadership to high, it was felt that to assume this was both risky and unnecessary. The distributions are sufficiently clear for the interpretive purpose, and to treat each column in each table separately for statistical test purposes seemed an unnecessary burden on the reader.

3. We elicited some interesting statements from our respondents regarding what they thought they had accomplished, but the analysis of leadership seemed already so long and complex it was decided to omit them from the text.

CHAPTER 8

How Active Participants Look at their Schools

We have seen that active participants in school affairs are affected in a variety of ways by their participation. We now turn our attention away from the question of impact on the individual and toward the attitudes and impact of participants on the schools themselves. It may be, as we have argued, that much participation cannot usefully be regarded as truly purposive in the sense of being aimed at influencing school decisions. As many observers have noted, PTA-type activity is often organized with the rather explicit intention of providing support for the schools rather than policy input. Support, even diffuse support, may often have policy implications, however. If it weakens among those citizens who have been actively supportive, the schools may have real trouble mobilizing others to give them public backing. Moreover, although those who provide broadly approving support may remain relatively quiet with regard to most specific policy issues, it is often this component of the population that is comparatively well-informed about what is going on and therefore is alert to potential conflicts when they arise. And thus it will often be from this component of the community that active policy opposition or demands for specific change will arise. For all these reasons it is important to examine how active participants feel about their schools and to identify the factors that account for variation in the level of support.

In this study we have undertaken a number of approaches to the problem. First of all, we asked how people felt about the schools. "Are they doing a good job, not so good, or what?" We then asked essentially the same question regarding the school board, the school administration, and the teachers. Another line of attack was similar to those which have been used in studying the general topic of trust in government. Respondents were given a series of statements dealing with waste, complexity, honesty, and responsiveness of governmental officials and asked whether they agreed or disagreed. We added to this procedure by asking people to give the evaluations separataly for each of five levels of government; national, state, county, local, and school. From these answers we can develop a picture of how "trust in schools" compares with trust in other governmental institutions.

We asked a series of questions designed to measure the respondent's sense of access and confidence in seeking to influence school decisions. This included the perception of the impact that participation of self and others had on the school program and a query about where one could go with a complaint about school affairs. In addition, we asked how much influence "people like yourself" have over the schools and how responsive the schools would be to a complaint. For comparison we asked these two questions also about local government.

Finally, we asked whether the respondent thought the schools were getting better, worse, or staying about the same. When all of these approaches are examined, in relation to the host of demographic, contextual, activity and attitudinal variables that we have employed to characterize each respondent, we are able to develop a comprehensive and detailed picture of the nature of support for the schools that portion of the community most concerned, the active participants.

The Assessment of Schools

Americans think well of their schools. They may not wish to spend more money on them, and they have a considerable list of specific complaints. But in general terms a fairly substantial majority of those who hold an opinion think the schools are doing a good job. Watts and Free have found consistently that about 60 percent of the total adult population rates their public schools good or excellent, and that this proportion is higher in smaller communities, which would include those in this study, and among the better educated.[1] Thus it is not surprising to find that 83 percent of our activists gave an approving response. As high as this figure is, however, there are interesting variations among the subgroups contained within it.

There are virtually no differences of any significance among demographic groupings. There is, however, a discernible connection between positive evaluation of schools and family background. Those respondents whose families were active in the community and, especially, those whose families were very interested in the schools are more likely to think the schools are good (Gammas = .19 and .31, respectively). There is one noteworthy difference among the communities of the study. In Kirkwood, with its efforts to effect racial balance through reorganization, there was a somewhat larger proportion of dissatisfied activists, but interestingly virtually none of these mentioned race, discipline or academic standards as the reason for their unhappiness. Indeed, we might note that overall the St. Louis area activists were less concerned about the problems of discipline and race than was a Gallup national sample.[2]

We find only a very modest relationship between the amount of activity in school affairs and general attitude toward the schools (Gamma = .15). Neither is there much difference in approval between school officers and backbenchers, nor among the different groups of officers. Those who take a more active role or who do so over a longer period of time do not seem thereby to acquire a more favorable view of the schools.

The same may be said concerning impact of school activity. Those who report a greater overall impact on themselves from their participation are neither more nor less likely to think well of the schools. On two specific items of impact, however, both concerning opinion change, there is a significant relationship. People who say that their opinion has changed since they became active are more likely to be unfavorable toward the schools (Gamma = -.45), and those who specifically assert that participation has altered their thinking also tend to think the schools are "not as good" (Gamma = -.33).

These findings must be disturbing. Again, the other components of impact do not show much relationship, and therefore the behavioral consequences of these attitude changes may not amount to much. Moreover, we are dealing with a relatively small proportion of the total set of school activists. Only forty-eight (9.7 percent) said their opinion had changed since becoming active and thought the schools were not so good, while 7.1 percent had changed towards approving the schools. 11.9 percent of the total were negative and identified participation as specifically responsible for their changed opinion while only 5 percent went the other way. We do not know directly whether the opinion change they report actually was related to the positive/negative evaluative dimensions, though the consistency of the direction of change suggests that it was. Nevertheless, the fact that a significant fraction of activists, having taken part, conclude that the schools are not so good must mean that they believe they have learned something important by participating and that something is negative.

An argument can be made that those people who generally display a strong tendency to take direct personal action with respect to their community problems are also more likely to be critical of the schools. The critics do not display any special inclination to take part in community organizations (Gamma = .002), but they are much more likely to have engaged in such direct actions as writing letters or going to see officials (Gamma = .32). They are a bit more involved in partisan politics (Gamma = .17) and electoral activity (Gamma = .18), and somewhat more attentive to the political world generally (Gamma = .20). Conversely, the school critics are less likely to think that their community gives good support to the schools (Gamma = .31), so their somewhat negative view may extend beyond education to embrace the community itself.

Another tack on the problem of characterizing the school critics may be taken by examining reactions to two statements. The first asserts: "Sometimes governmental affairs are so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on". Respondents indicated whether they agreed with this statement regarding each level of government; national, state, county, local and schools. At every level those who were more positive about the schools were also more likely to agree with the statement (Gammas from .23 to .32). In other words, a positive school evaluation was to some extent associated with a sense of bewilderment growing out of the complexity of public problems. There may well be other elements involved here since there seems no logical link between the two attitudes. The second statement was more pointed. It read: "Public officials waste a lot of tax money." The school critics were substantially more likely to agree with respect to local government (Gamma = .38) and the schools (Gamma = .35) but not the other levels. Thus the school critics seem particularly upset about fiscal waste at the local community level, and this concern about waste may be a major reason for their negative view of the schools. Among the individual responses there were several which noted that as a result of this participation they had learned what "crooks" or wastrels the school officials were, but it must be emphasized, that such conclusions as these constituted a very small minority of the total.

Finally, we may note one other set of factors that showed some degree of association with the school critics. A number of questions were asked concerning contemporary policy issues. Some dealt with what are sometimes called "style" issues such as gun control or women's liberation. Others involved questions of economic self-interest including where the responsibility lay for medical care, employment, housing, care for the aged, and helping the poor. The results are quite uneven, but there seems to be a slight tendency for the school critics to be relatively conservative on economic issues. This would fit well with the concern about the squandering of tax money. On some style issues also this group is slightly more conservative, but on those questions more traditionally associated with civil libertarian views the critics were more tolerant. Such findings are reminiscent of Stouffer's results wherein middle class conservatives, particularly those who were organizational activists, were often the bulwark of the defense of civil liberties.[3] Most of the relationshipsin our data, however, were too weak to encourage much interpretation, and the attitude toward waste discussed above remains a more salient item.

As we move ahead to examine attitudes toward three components of the school system; the school board, the school administration, and the teachers, we must bear in mind that the vast majority of the school activists approve of what the schools are doing. Our probes of the dissenters should not be allowed to obscure this fact. Nevertheless, we should note that one group of purposive participants consists of fiscal and social conservatives who tend to be rather critical of the schools. They do not represent the lunatic fringe, by any means, despite the fears expressed by Superintendent Colaw about St. Charles. (See Chapter 2, above.) They do remind us, however, that purposive school participants are not always in favor of expanded school programs or new directions in educational philosophy.

School Boards, School Administrations and Teachers

School activists give high marks not only to the schools in general but also to the school boards, school administration and teachers. Table 8-1 presents the data. The school boards come off slightly less well and the teachers rather better, but the most significant thing is that all are at such a high level of approbation. Moreover, this holds true, and at nearly equal strength, in all six communities.

TABLE 8-1

Evaluation of School Components

	Schools	School Boards	School Administration	School Teachers
Good	83.4%	82.4%	87.6%	92.6%
Not so good	16.6%	17.6%	12.4%	7.4%

Evaluative responses regarding the three components were quite closely related to each other and to the overall evaluation of the schools. The Gamma relationships shown in Table 8-2 suggests that the school boards are somewhat less closely tied to the other components and to the overall evaluation. Consequently, it would seem that the boards are regarded as less responsible for the quality of the schools than the teachers and administration.

This differentiation only obtains for a relatively small number of

TABLE 8-2

Interrelationships (Gammas) of School Component Evaluations

	Schools	Board	Administration	Teachers
Overall School Evaluation	---	.68	.85	.90
Evaluation of School Board		---	.82	.57
Evaluation of School Administration			-----	.88
Evaluation of Teachers				----

people, of course, since all six gammas are still quite high. Nevertheless, it can be observed that the teacher component is less often singled out for criticism than either the school board or the administration. For example, of those who thought the schools were good, which was the overwhelming majority, 10.7 percent thought the board was not so good, 5.2 percent were negative about the administration, but only 2.0 percent were critical of the teachers. Conversely, of those who thought the schools were not so good, 10.6 percent gave a positive evaluation to the teachers, while 9.1 percent and 8.5 percent were favorable toward the board and administration, respectively.

There are some modest differences among demographic groupings in component evaluations. For example, men are more critical of the school administrations; income and education are associated with positive evaluations of all. But none of the relationships is very strong. Attitudes towards teachers appear to be related to family background. Those whose families were interested in schools were more positive about teachers (Gamma = .26) but not about the other components.

As was true of the overall evaluation, those whose opinion had changed were more likely to be critical of each component. The strongest relationship involving opinion change resulting from participation was that respecting the school administration. The more opinion had changed, the more negative was the view of administrators.

A strong relationship exists, especially for evaluation of teachers, with the attitudes toward the community's support for the schools. The better respondents believe their community supports the schools, the happier they are with them and with their individual components. Evaluations of each component were related to attentiveness and quite strongly to personal activity. Attitudes toward school administrations, but not boards or teachers, were connected to the amount of school activity and its impact. The same was true of involvement in the community's organizations. And in each case, the more active and involved the respondent was, the more critical the attitudes.

There are several differences in the responses to the statements regarding understanding ("Most of the time I can't understand why elected officials behave the way they do."), waste and complexity. Overall evaluation of the schools was not related to responses on understanding, but evaluation of school boards was. When the "understanding" item was put regarding schools, people who felt they could not understand school officials were more negative about each of the three groups (Gamma was .39, .27 and .335 for the board, administration and teachers, respectively) but did not feel so much that way about the schools in general (Gamma = .13). Feelings about waste at every level of government was quite strongly related to negative evaluation of school boards and school administrations, but only at local and school levels was there also an association with evaluation of teachers.

This array of findings contains a good deal of unexplained complexity. We do not propose to continue probing the intricacies, in the main because we do not feel that the responses constitute such an unshakeable and real a set of indicators as to encourage unlimited manipulating. Two things stand out in these results, however. One is that activism is associated, at least in part, with negative evaluation of the schools and of their components. This is a point we have made previously as well, and here in these data we see it further supported.

The second item of special interest is the extent to which this negative, or at least critical, attitude is focussed upon the school administrators. Not all of the findings are consistent on this point, and the school boards come in for a full share of criticism. But the specific association between activism and negative evaluation is found only with respect to administrators, and this should surely give some pause to school principals who hope to mobilize parental support through increased participation in the school's P.T.A. They should be on notice that sometimes it works the other way.

Levels of Trust

Up to this point we have discussed only isolated items of a larger set of data derived from presenting respondents with a group of eight statements similar to those used by other investigators to measure political trust and personal efficacy.[4] Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the eight statements in five different contexts; as they applied to the national, state, county, local, and school levels of government. In this section we will consider primarily the extent and variety of overall trust in the schools as compared to the evaluations of the other four levels. For these purposes we employ a summary index of trust, dichotomizing responses for each level at approximately the mean.

Social scientists have noted with considerable dismay the dramatic decline in trust registered in opinion polls since about 1958 and especially since 1964. These studies, however, have all focused on national political processes and institutions. At least, the questions have not permitted distinguishing among levels of government. Our findings represent an important modification of these studies. Table 8-3 presents the distribution of of positive, trusting, confident responses. Although there are a good many variations within these overall distributions, it is clear that the schools are the most favorably regarded. Moreover, in this immediate post-Watergate period the farther one gets from Washington, D.C., the more confident people are in their government. Of course, these are school activists so it would be astonishing if they did not feel more secure regarding the schools than with other governmental levels with which they may or may not have had much

Table 8-3

Trust in Five Levels of Government

		National	State	County	Local	School
Number of positive responses	Low 0	14.1%	5.3%	1.4%	1.4%	0.6%
	1	17.6	11.0	4.7	3.0	1.2
	2	15.4	12.4	8.1	5.7	1.4
	3	15.8	14.8	8.5	6.5	3.7
	4	13.0	16.8	14.0	10.5	6.5
	5	12.0	14.4	15.4	15.0	9.3
	6	5.5	12.8	17.2	15.8	14.6
	7	4.9	8.7	17.8	19.7	25.8
	High 8	1.6	3.7	13.0	22.5	36.9

contact. But the comparatively high levels of trust in local and even county government suggests that those respondents generally identify in a positive manner with the institutions of their immediate community, while the processes of state and national government are at once more remote and more suspect. We cannot tell, of course, whether there has been any change in these attitudes comparable to the changes reported in national studies. Generally those studies show that participant citizens are at least as turned off by their government as are the apathetic. In any case, we do not find any reason to think there has been any loss of trust in the schools.

Rather similar relationships obtain in most of the six communities, but there are some interesting differences. In Granite City the overall level of trust and understanding is lower, in part because of the lower level of education there, but partly also because Illinois government is less well regarded than Missouri. In both Illinois communities the state and county governments receive distinctly lower ratings than any Missouri community gives, and general reputations for integrity in public life would probably confirm this view. In Normandy, with its twenty-three separate communities, there is, appropriately, a lower level of confidence in local government than anywhere else except Granite City. But, again, everywhere the schools receive overwhelmingly positive evaluations.

Let us now turn to examine some of the principal correlates of variation in levels of trust. First of all, males are more confident than females (Gamma = .31). This is less true at local levels, however, and least true of schools (Gamma = .14). Income and education are rather strongly related to trust and confidence, as one would expect, and at every level. The strongest connection of all is between education and confidence in schools. One interpretation that might be placed on this is that the school activists vary in their familiarity with other levels of government, but all have had substantial contact with the schools. Therefore, in evaluating the schools the impact of educational differences, which would be expected to be significant, can be most directly expressed.

Table 8-4

Relationships of Income and Education to Confidence in Government (Gammas)

	Overall	National	State	County	Local	School
Income	.325	.34	.32	.23	.37	.33
Education	.37	.426	.33	.22	.42	.47

There is a weak but perhaps meaningful relationship between the amount of school activity (.19) and its impact (.14) in the one hand, and confidence in the schools, on the other. Even though the relationship is modest, it is substantially greater than with other levels of government, suggesting that getting involved with school affairs does increase, however slightly, one's confidence and trust.

Three other indexes, none of which depends upon specifically school-centered activity, show a significant association with trust and confidence levels. These relate to overall organizational participation, attentiveness to public affairs, and the extent of direct, personal activity to present one's views to public officials. The data appear in Table 8-5. Interestingly, all three display quite consistent strength of positive association across all five levels of government. This suggests that these are measures of general orientation toward public affairs even for school activists, rather than tapping a more specific school-centered set of attitudes.

Table 8-5

Community Involvement Indexes and Trust in Government

	(Gammas)					
	Overall	National	State	County	Local	School
Organizational Involvement	.31	.29	.30	.28	.35	.29
Attentiveness	.34	.31	.30	.28	.34	.36
Personal Activity	.25	.24	.20	.20	.22	.30

There is a modest relationship between confidence and the general sense that participation makes a difference to the quality of the schools. Curiously, there is no relationship (Gamma = .065) between the sense of trust and confidence and one's belief that the fact that one is active would make a difference to the treatment one would receive with a specific school complaint. In other words, the general level of trust is related to the general level of belief in the instrumental efficacy of participation but not to the specific level of confidence. Indeed, the two levels of belief bear only a .18 Gamma relationship to one another.

This does not mean, however, that there are no significant consequences for specific school-centered efficacy resulting from varying levels of generalized trust. For example, there is quite a strong connection between the sense of trust at every level and the respondents' sense that "people like them" have influence over local government (G = .37). But there is a considerably weaker relationship (G = .14) with the sense of influence over the schools. What this would seem to indicate is that school participants are less dependent on a generalized sense of confidence in assessing their influence on schools, where, after all they have direct and substantial experience. That sense of trust does come into play as one moves away from the areas of immediate experience.

Confidence about access has consequences also for the evaluation of schools and of their component parts. Thus the greater the sense that "people like us" can influence the schools, the more favorable the response to school boards, (G = .23) and teachers (G = .25). The evaluation of schools generally, however, is only weakly affected (G = .14). By contrast the perceived influence in the local community is unrelated to evaluation of schools (G = .01), as might logically be expected.

We have not attempted an exhaustive examination of the implications of our findings on trust in government. Perhaps in a kind of summary two additional points can be made. First, the relationships we have described are mainly at a very general level. That is, they obtain more for generalized attitudes and expectations than for more specific considerations. This fits well with Citrin's argument that the national decline in trust phenomenon has to do largely with quite specific dissatisfaction with particular politicians and policies and does not necessarily tell us much about the behavioral inclinations of the citizenry.[5] The second, and related, point is that many school participants are engaged in routine, non-purposive, activity. They carry an essentially roseate view of the world with them as they act, and it may not signify any very deeplying conviction about the world should a crisis arise.

Access and Responsiveness

We now move one step further to ask whether participants would expect the school to be responsive to a complaint. Over half (56.6%) said the schools would be very responsive and another 36.1 percent expected at least a moderate response. These are slightly higher proportions than were registered regarding the responsiveness of local government. Three-fourths of the total felt that this active participation would make some difference in securing a response from the schools. The communities did not vary much except that Granite City respondents were considerably less confident about the usefulness of participation. Table 8-6 indicates that expected responsiveness is rather strongly associated with evaluation of the school board, but

Table 8-6

Expected School Responsiveness to Complaint and Evaluation of School Components (Gammas)

	Evaluation of Schools	School Boards	School Administration	Teachers
Perceived Responsiveness	.14	.36	.17	.18
Would Activism Make a Difference	.05	.02	-.22	-.11

rather weakly with other components and with the generalized judgment. Apparently, it is the perceived virtue or lack thereof in the school board that most strongly affects one's judgment about the responsiveness of the school system to complaints. On the other hand, as the Table shows, it is felt that activism makes more difference in getting response satisfaction by those who regard the school administration, and to a lesser extent the teachers, less well. If administrators are weak, for instance, they may be responsive to complaints and bend with every wind but their overall reputation may nevertheless suffer. This empirical distinction between evaluation and perceived responsiveness among school activists may contain some important lessons to guide school officials.

Finally, in investigating access and its effects on evaluation, we asked to whom respondents would go if they had some complaint about the schools. Coding the responses presented some problems, but most could be coded as either selecting the school board, the principal, or the superintendent. There was no difference between school critics and school supporters in the inclination to choose the superintendent. But there was a striking tendency for those who were unhappy to escalate the level of their complaint and go to the school board, even if they were displeased with the board's own performance.

Table 8-7

Evaluation of Schools and Channels for Complaint

	Overall School Evaluation		School Boards		School Administration		Teachers	
	Good	Not So Good	Good	Not So Good	Good	Not So Good	Good	Not So Good
Percent Choosing School Board	24.3%	36.9%	26.6%	32.4%	26.1%	29.8%	25.2%	41.2%
Percent Choosing Principal	32.3	16.7	29.5	12.2	31.8	15.8	31.4	14.7

There are some striking differences among communities in the channels selected to pursue a complaint. Ladue registered much the highest in the proportion picking the principal and Normandy was second highest. In Ladue there were few present problems and those that might be imagined in the future would be likely to be small and specific, the kind that could best be handled at the level of the individual school. Normandy had plenty of problems but they were not seen as systemic. Rather they tended to be matters affecting individual students and particular teachers. Normandy reported the highest number of people saying they would take their problems to the teacher, though to be sure it was only 5.3 percent of the total.

On the other hand, in St. Charles, with its highly politicized board and its manipulative superintendent, nearly two-thirds of the respondents pick one or the other as the focus of their complaining process, while principals and teachers are well down the list. Different political contexts lead to different patterns of political activity.

Are the Schools Better or Worse?

We asked our school activists directly whether they felt that the schools in their community were getting better, worse, or staying about the same. Inasmuch as the question specified no base period for comparison it may be that the responses reflect more ambiguity than they seem to. Gallup found in 1973 that, when asked to compare today's education with their own, sixty-one percent of the respondents said it was better now, and only twenty percent said it was worse.[6] Public school parents were even more favorable, 69 percent to 17 percent.

Our data suggest that using the adults' own educational experience as the benchmark may accentuate the optimism regarding the present situation by stretching the time of comparison too far back. In any event, of those with an opinion only 50.2 percent of our group felt that schools were getting better, while 13.5 percent thought they were getting worse. The great difference between the national sample and the St. Louis group lies with those who said things were about the same. Of the St. Louis activists, 36.3 percent saw no change while only 9 percent of the national group of public school parents held this view.

When we probe the factors associated with variation in attitudes about the direction of school change, we find that virtually none of the variables that were related to other evaluative dimensions seem to be similarly situated here. Education and income, for example, are entirely unconnected and so are all the demographic variables on which we have data. Among the very longest residents in the community there is a more negative feeling, but the relationship is not linear for the remaining respondents. There is a moderate connection between optimism about school change and perceived ability to influence schools (Gamma = .25) and to secure a response (Gamma = .20). There is virtually no relationship, however, between any of the indexes of activity, either within the school arena or in the community, and perceptions of school change. Attitudes regarding certain "style" issues such as women's lib and court treatment of criminals are also modestly related (.23 and .21, respectively), with adherents of the more "conservative" position feeling also that the schools had gotten worse.

One rather intriguing finding is that there is a fairly strong relationship between perceptions of school change and attitudes about the youth of today. That is, those who think schools are better also think the younger generation is better (Gamma = .297) and vice versa.

It appears, however, that the most important factor in accounting for why people think schools are better or worse is not anything to do with individual characteristics but is related to the community in which they live. Table 8-8 displays the data for the six communities. The communities especially requiring comment are Kirkwood and Normandy. Even though very few people mentioned race, or any associated issues or euphemisms for race as being responsible for their views about the schools, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the racial factor in these two communities accounts for the relatively large group of activists who think the schools

Table 8-8

Perception of School Change in Six Communities

Perception of change	Edwardsville	Granite City	Kirkwood	Ladue	Normandy	St. Charles	Total
Better	59.1%	50.0%	42.5%	48.3%	30.3%	54.4%	47.9%
Same	29.3	34.9	35.0	41.4	39.5	30.0	34.5
Worse	4.5	12.8	18.8	6.9	25.0	11.1	12.8
Don't Know	9.1	2.3	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.3	4.7

have gotten worse. At the same time, of course, it should not be overlooked that these pessimists remain a distinct minority even at worst.

Conclusion

We have found that citizens who participate in school affairs remain positive in their supportive attitudes toward the schools, optimistic about the future, trusting in the general probity and effectiveness with which the schools are administered, and confident about their ability to have some influence over the course of educational policy in their respective communities. There are variations, to be sure, among different groups and classes of respondents, and some tendency for the more active participants also to be more critical. But there is broad support in these findings for the ancient view that the active citizen would also be the confident and effective citizen. And there is broad support also for the view that suburban school-centered participation bears little relationship to the larger and more cynical world of national politics.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER 8

1. See William Watts and Lloyd Free, *State of the Nation*, New York: Universe Books, 1973; and *State of the Nation, 1974*, Washington, D.C.: Potomac Associates, 1974.

2. See Stanley Elam, ed., *The Gallup Polls of Attitudes Toward Education, 1969-1973*, Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa, 1973.

3. See Samuel A. Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties*, New York: Doubleday, 1955.

4. For an extensive discussion see Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 68 (Sept., 1974), pp. 951-972; Jack Citrin, "Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in Government," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 68 (Sept., 1974), pp. 973-988; Arthur H. Miller, "Rejoinder to 'Comment' by Jack Citrin: Political Discontent or Ritualism?" *American Political Science Review*, vol. 68 (Sept., 1974), pp. 989-1001. The statements we employed are contained in the questionnaire in the appendix.

5. See Citrin, *op. cit*.

6. See Elam, ed., *op. cit*.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

In a sense we have only begun to analyze the data resulting from our survey of school participants in six St. Louis area districts. There are many more ways to combine and refine and process such a vast array of material as this. For the most part, however, we have resisted the temptation to wring the last drop of interpretive blood from the study, or even to employ the most powerful methodologies for manipulating the data. The principal reasons for remaining at a fairly elementary level are simply these.

First, our data are those of a case study. We do not know whether they represent more than the idiosyncratic characteristics of these particular districts at this particular juncture of history. It would be presumptuous to assume that the relationships we have found were generic to all participatory situations or even just to those involving schools. On the other hand, it would be silly to dismiss the findings as of no relevance beyond the boundaries of the St. Louis metropolitan area. We do not know, but, as successful case studies should, this investigation has yielded a rich harvest of findings and interpretations that warrant further investigation.

The second reason we have stayed at a relatively simple level of analysis is based on our belief that survey data which purport to represent behavioral reality must be treated with considerable caution. We do not have data that directly express the amount of school activity undertaken. We rely instead on the respondents' perceptions and recollections of what they have done and why. The survey instrument is very often "the only game in town," and we use it as carefully and systematically as we can. But it is, nevertheless, a construct of the researcher. The resulting findings must be treated with care, and not elevated to a reality of their own apart from that often noisy and confusing world of human activity from which the data originally were taken.

Having expressed those caveats, let us turn to the positive side of the research. What have we found? Surely the most important finding is that in a very real sense John Stuart Mill was right. The more people participate, the greater the impact of that participation will be on them; and the greater the impact, the more likely it is to be in the realm of personal self-development. Even though our data are cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, this conclusion seems well-supported. And it is clearly of major importance to democratic theory broadly and to the theories of participation in a narrower sense. We cannot be very confident about which comes first, the participation or the self-actualization. Our best judgment is that there is a good deal of the latter--whereby those who were already predisposed toward active participation do become active and at the same time display the beneficent effects that Mill predicted. But we also believe that there is some of the other, too; people brought routinely and unenthusiastically into activity via their children, who subsequently are "turned on," often by a controversial issue, and cross over the threshold into the realm of purposive participation. This mobilization function, however modest in the numbers of people affected, is an important and often unappreciated contribution of support activities like the PTA to a more critical and dynamic community life.

A second broad theme of our findings has been built upon those of Verba and Nie and others who, in recent years, have begun to identify multiple dimensions or modes in the patterns of political participation. Most simply, this has meant that people who do one kind of thing do not necessarily get involved in another. Our data amply confirm this. What is a good deal less clear is how many distinct modes of activity there are among school participants. The answer to this depends very importantly for us, as it did for Verba and Nie, on the methodology used. The questions asked set limits to the answers that can be given. The coding of answers may also affect the results, as, of course, do the routines employed to process the data. In our study we distinguished principally between purposive and supportive participants, and secondarily between leaders and followers. But there are other interesting distinctions to be made according to the amount and type of activity undertaken. Our results are perhaps best understood as a warning against premature closure on the list of participation modes and a call for further exploration.

Much, though not all, of what we have found bears particularly upon the situation of the schools and would have little or no meaning outside the institutional arena of the schools. We have only begun to map the connections and comparisons among the several arenas in which American citizens may take some active part. Until we more fully understand how much of an observed pattern is unique to a given arena, we must speak cautiously. Do all community groups have their "party hacks?" Do political parties display a counterpart to the supportive but non-purposive participants we have found to be so prominent in the school setting? Further investigation of a rather more open-ended variety is required before we will know with confidence all of the dimensions that are involved in American political participation. What this study has shown most clearly, and distinctively since other investigators have not touched the point, is that the type of participation can be substantially independent of the amount. Supportive activists often spent as much time as purposive activists, but they did very different things and for different reasons.

Finally, how much does this study tell us about how the schools might be made more effective as educational instruments or more responsive as mechanisms of a democratic society? Our findings bear on these issues mainly in a negative way. The conclusion is this. Citizen participation in its usual forms will have relatively little direct effect on educational policy. Broad-based citizen movements may be very helpful in providing understanding and sympathetic support for school programs, but they are unlikely to work any profound changes in those programs. Participating citizens like the schools as they are. They do not seek reform. For new thrusts in educational programs we will need to look to specific, more narrowly-based, reform elites; people with that cause uppermost in their zealous hearts. And educational reformers are most likely to be found, not among the ranks of interested parents or other lay citizens, but among professional educators.

Would crisis or deep community conflict produce a different pattern? Would there then be broader pressures for change brought by exercised citizens? Perhaps. There are some traces of this among our Kirkwood respondents where there had been serious conflict and where there were more purposive participants in action. Yet even there the differences were mainly at the margin. Most Kirkwood participants were like those elsewhere, supportive of the schools as they were and not very upset about anything in their local community milieu. The picture we find is one of suburban contentment. Citizen participation in the schools serves partly perhaps to achieve that relatively blissful state but mainly to reinforce and sustain it. In a troubled world that is no mean contribution.

Revised Questionnaire - Citizen Participation in the Public Schools

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To Be Read to Respondent:

As I think you know, this interview is one of the several hundred being conducted in the Greater St. Louis area to discover more about why people become active in school affairs and what effects their involvement may have on them. In order to get at some of the important factors it is necessary to ask a good many questions, not only about school-related activities but about other things that may be important as well. Also, we want to be able to relate our findings to other studies that have been done, and we have put in certain questions in order to have maximum comparability.

The information we gather from you will be merged with the responses of many others so that in the final analysis even we will be unable to tell which particular person said what. Everything you say will be absolutely confidential, and no one outside the small project staff will ever be allowed to look at the complete questionnaires. You will notice that your name and address are on this separate sheet of the interview schedule. We needed that information in order to be able to find you when the time came to conduct this interview. Now we need it no longer so I will tear off this sheet and throw it away.
(INTERVIEWER TEAR OFF AND CRUMPLE SHEET)

Name ______________________________

Address ____________________________

Interview Number ______________________
School District ______________________
Interviewer ______________________
Date of Interview ______________________

Citizen Participation in the Public Schools

Section I. Personal Data. [To be filled in by Interviewer from preliminary questionnaire]

To begin with we want to get some background information about you. Some of it we already have from the earlier questionnaire. These are just a few additional items.

3. Sex ____________

4. Race ____________

5. School District ______________________

6. Municipality or subcommunity ________________________

7. Length of residence in school district ________________

8. Number of Children ____________ Ages __________________

9. Age ___________

10. Self-Rating of Activity
    A. Schools ______________
    B. Community _____________
    C. Political Parties _______________

11. School-related Organization Office _____________

12. What kind of work do you normally do? ________________

13. If you are not the head of your household, would you tell me what kind of work that person normally does? __________________________

14. Where did you live before you moved to this school district? ______________

15. Can you tell me how many different places you have lived in during the last ten years or so? I mean areas or parts of the country outside the St. Louis area ____

16. What is your marital status? Are you married?

If you are not the head of your household, would you tell me what
of work that person normally does? ____________________

14. Where did you live before you moved to this school district? __________

15. Can you tell me how many different places you have lived in during the last ten years or so? I mean areas or parts of the country outside the St. Louis area ____________________________________

16. What is your marital status? Are you married?__________
IF NO Divorced?______ Widowed?______ Other?________

17. What was the last grade or year in school you completed?________
(USE NUMBERS)

18. Do you own your home or do you rent?____________
18A. INTERVIEWER FILL IN: Apartment________ or House ________

19. What is your religion_______________? (Get specific denomination if Protestant.)
19A. IF NONE: What was the religious affiliation of your family when you were growing up?
19B. About how often do you attend religious services? Regularly______, Sometimes_ ______, Not very often______, Never ______.

20. In general, do you think of yourself or your family as coming from some particular region of the United States, or from some foreign country?_____
20A. IF YES: What is that?______________

21. What was your father's occupation?____________________________

22. In general, how active was your family in community affairs when you were growing up? Would you say they were very active________, moderately active_______, not very active_______, not at all active_______?

23. How about school matters specifically? Were your parents very interested_______, moderately interested_____, not very interested______, not at all interested_____, in school affairs.

24. Did the attitudes or activities of your family have anything to do with your becoming interested or involved in the schools?
IF YES: How was that?

ID_____ 2

Section II. Organizational Memberships and Activities

We want to know something about the groups and organizations that people belong to and what kind of part they play in those groups.

25. I am going to give you a list of various types of organizations. In the first column could you indicate whether you belong to any particular organization in each type. If you belong to more than one group in a particular type, place the number of separate groups you belong to in that space. (HAND LIST TO RESPONDENT)
26. If you consider yourself active in the group or groups you belong to, please indicate that in the space marked Active. Write yes for active, no for inactive and mixed if you are active on one group of that category but not in another.
27. Have you ever held elective office in any of the organizations you belong to. Please write yes if you have been an officer of any group in each category.

SECTION III. Inventory of School Activities

Now we want to ask you about what things you have done in relation to the schools.

28. There are many different kinds of activities related to the schools that people can engage in. What kinds of things have you done in the past year or so? For example, have you gone to PTA meetings, school board meetings, worked in the school as a room sponsor, helped in fund raising affairs, and that sort of thing? Tell me as many different things that you have done as you can think of.

29. There are a lot of different meetings held. Some deal with schools, many are about other things. Including all the different meetings you

many are about other things. Including all the different meetings you can think of, both school-related and other kinds, about how many meetings would you say you have attended during an average month during the school year. ______________?

30. About how many of these would have involved school matters_____________?

31. What about elections here in the school district? Have you worked in any of these during the last year or two?_______________

32. IF YES: Were those candidate elections or tax elections?___________

What exactly did you do in the campaign? Did you work in the headquarters? Canvass? Work at the polls? Telephone people? or What?

How did you get in involved in the campaign?

32. IF NO TO 31: Was there any particular reason why you did not take part?

33. Have you ever served on committees of the PTA or in some other school-related group?__________

IF YES TO 33: (Otherwise N A)

34. Do you feel that your committee work was useful?__________
How do you mean that?

ID ______ 3

ORGANIZATION LIST

Types of Organizations	Member	Active	Officer
A. Labor Unions			
B. Fraternal groups, such as Masons, Elks, and their women's auxiliaries			
C. Sports Clubs			
D. Political Groups, either partisan or other, such as voter leagues			
E. Veterans groups			
F. Youth groups such as scouts			
G. Professional or academic societies; e.g. AMA, Phi Beta Kappa, etc.			
H. Community service clubs, such as Rotary, Lions, etc.			
I. Hobby clubs, coin, stamps, etc.			
J. Farm organizations			
K. Literary, art or study groups			
L. School fraternities or sororities			
M. Nationality or ethnic groups			
N. Church or religious organizations			
O. Business organizations; e.g., Chamber of Commerce, Real Estate Board			
P. Groups devoted to a special cause or principle, ACLU, NOW, etc.			
Q. Other			

ID______ 4

IF YES TO 31: (Otherwise N A)

35. How about your work in school elections. Was that useful?
How do you mean that?

36. What about other people? In general, do other people around here take part in school affairs about as you would expect them to, as much as you think they should, or what?

37. When there is something that needs to be done here in ____________________ what kinds of people can you generally count on to pitch in and help?

38. Are there some who don't do what they should? __________
IF YES: Why is that?

Section IV. Recruitment to School Activity

39. When did you first begin to take part in school-related activities?

40. What got you started?

AFTER RESPONSE INTERVIEWER PROBE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING THAT HAS NOT BEEN MENTIONED BY RESPONDENT IN INITIAL COMMENT.

A. Were there any particular issues that prompted you to become active?

become active?

B. Was there some event that brought you out to the meetings?

C. Did any particular person ask you to get involved?

D. Did you feel some sort of duty to get involved?

E. Did your children play any special role in getting you to become active?

AFTER EACH POSITIVE RESPONSE, ASK: Would you tell me about that?

41. Some people remain active in things; others go for a while, drop out, and start again later. Have you remained pretty active ever since you first got started? __________

41A. IF NO: Why did you drop out?

41B What got you started again?

42. Was there a time in the past when you were more active in school affairs than you are now?

42A IF YES: Why was that?

43. Thinking about the future, how long do you expect to remain active in school affairs?

44. Do you feel more of a duty to participate in school affairs than in other aspects of the community?

44A IF YES: Why is that?

45. If you should cut back your involvement in school-related activities, would you expect to get involved in something else? ______________.

IF YES: What would that probably be?

46. How about people generally around here? Are they more actively concerned and involved in school affairs than they used to be, about the same, less involved, or what?

47. As each of your children has been in school, have you been equally active or has there been variation?

47A IF VARIATION: Why was that?

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF SCHOOL BOARD, PTA, OR CITIZENS COMMITTEE QUESTIONS ARE TO BE INCLUDED, THEY GO HERE]

Section V. Affect Toward Schools and Community

48. In general, how do you feel about the job the schools are doing here in ______________________? Are they doing a good job, not so good, or what?

49. Is there anything in particular that makes you say that?

50. What is the best feature of the schools here?

51. What do you think is the worst aspect of your school system?

52. What would you say was the most important problem facing the schools in ________________________________?

53. Do you feel that the participation of yourself and others in school affairs has had any significant impact on the quality of the school program?

IF YES: What is that?

IF NO: Why do you think that is?

54. How about the school board? On the whole are they doing a good job, not so good, or what?

ID ___ ___ 6

55. Is there anything in particular that makes you say that?

56. How about the teachers in the classrooms? On the whole, are they doing a good job, not so good, or what?

57. How about the school administration? On the whole, are they doing a good job, not so good or what?

58. Again, is there anything in particular that makes you say that?

59. In general, would you say that the schools here are getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same? ____________________

What makes you say that?

60. Do you have a different opinion about the schools here than you did before you became active? __________

What is that?

61. How would you say your feelings about the schools here compare to the attitudes of other people around here. Would you say you were more favorable, less favorable, or about the same? ____________________

62. One other point about the community. Would you say that people around here generally give good support to the schools, not so good, or what?______

____

63. Generally, how do you feel about this community? Is it a good place to live or what?

Is there anything in particular that makes you say that?

64. In general, how do you feel about the so-called younger generation? Do you feel they are growing up to be better citizens? ____________ about the same? __________, worse?__________, than your generation?

Section VI. Accessibility, Efficacy and Involvement.

We want to know how you feel about your ability to affect the decisions of government.

65. How much influence do you think people like you can have over what local government does? A lot, a moderate amount, not very much, none at all.

____

66. How about the schools. Do you think people like yourself can have a lot of influence over the schools, a moderate amount, not very much, none at all ________________?

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67. If you had some complaint about a local government activity and you took that complaint to a member of the city council would you expect that person to pay a lot of attention to what you say, some attention, not very much, or none at all? ________________

68. Suppose the complaint had to do with the schools. Who would you go to in order to get action?

69. Would you expect your complaint to receive a lot of attention, a moderate amount, not very much, none at all? ________________

70. Do you think the fact that you are active in school affairs would make a difference in whether officials would listen to your complaint about how the schools were being run? Would it make a great deal of difference, a moderata amount, not very much, none at all? ________________

71. How interested are you in politics and national affairs? Would you say you are very interested, somewhat interested, only slightly interested, not at all interested. ________________

72. In general, how often do you discuss politics and national affairs with others? Every day ______, maybe once or twice a week ______, less than once a week ______, almost never ______.

73. How often do you discuss local community affairs with others? Every day ____, once or twice a week ______, less than once a week ______, almost never _____.

74. And now what about school matters. About how often do you discuss school questions with others? Every day ______, once or twice a week ______, less than once a week ______, almost never ______.

75. Have you ever written to a public official giving your opinion about something that should be done?

IF YES: What was the issue?

76. Have you ever gone personally to see an official to give your opinion about something you thought government should do?

IF YES: What was the issue?

77. Have you ever written to the editor of a newspaper or magazine expressing your opinion about something?

IF YES: What was the issue?

78. Suppose a law was being considered by Congress that you considered very unjust or harmful. What do you think you would try to do about it?

79. Suppose it was something being considered by your local government. What would you try to do about it?

80. What if it were the schools that were considering a policy you thought was bad. What would you do?

81. Are there any magazines that you read regularly? Which ones are they?

82. How often do you watch news broadcasts on TV; once a day ______, a few times a week ______, about once a week ______, less than once a week ______, almost never ______.

ID______ 8

83. How often do you read a newspaper? Every day ______, a few times a week ______, about once a week ______, less than once a week ______, almost never ______.

84. Which newspapers do you read more or less regularly?

85. Do you remember when you first began to follow politics and national affairs, - to really pay attention?

86. How about local community affairs. When did you first begin to pay attention to what was going on locally?

87. And what about school matters? When did you first begin to watch what was happening in the schools?

Our government is divided into various levels - national, state, city, county, school district, and so on - each with somewhat different organization and different responsibilities. We are interested in knowing how people feel about the various levels of government. I am going to give you a card that has five different government levels listed, each with a letter in front of the name. [GIVE CARD #1] Now I am going to read some statements about government which we hear from people almost every day. If you think the statement applies to any of these units of government just give me the appropriate letter or letters for the unit or units involved.

88. Most of the time I can't understand why elected officials behave the way they do.

89. In the long run, the people are responsible for bad government.

90. Leadership positions tend to go to people who deserve being chosen.

91. Public officials waste a lot of tax money.

92. Public officials pay little attention to the people who elect them when they decide what to do.

93. Sometimes governmental affairs are so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on.

94. I don't think public officials care much about what people like me think.

95. Quite a few of the people running the government don't seem to know what they're doing.

96. Most public officials are pretty honest and hard working.

97. Quite a few of the people running the government are a little crooked.

ID______ 9

Section VII. Partisan Identity and Activity

We would like to know something about your attitudes toward political parties in America. These are questions that are asked in many surveys and which give us something to compare with other studies.

98. Some people attach a great amount of loyalty to the political parties. Generally speaking, in elections where the parties are active, would you say that you personally care a good deal which party wins the election, or that you don't care very much which party wins.________________

99. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what? ________________

100. IF DEM OR REP: Would you call yourself a strong (Dem/Rep) or not so strong (Dem/Rep)? ________________

IF IND OR OTHER: Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic party?________________

101. IF INDEPENDENT CLOSER TO ONE PARTY: Was there ever a time when you thought of yourself as closer to the (Dem/Rep) party then to the (Rep/Dem) party?________________

IF INDEPENDENT CLOSE TO NEITHER PARTY: Was there ever a time when you thought of yourself as a Democrat or a Republican?

IF PARTY IDENTIFIER: Was there ever a time when you thought of yourself as a (Dem/Rep) rather than as a (Rep/Dem)?________________

102. IF PARTY IDENTIFIER WHO HAS CHANGED: When did you change from (Rep/Dem) to (Dem/Rep)?

IF INDEPENDENT WHO HAS CHANGED: When did you change from (previous identification to present ID)?____________________

103. How much do you feel that political parties help make the government pay attention to what people think? A good deal_____, some_____, or not much_____.

104A. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
Political parties are only interested in people's votes, not in their opinions.

104B. A good many local elections aren't important enough to bother with.

104C. The system would work better if we got rid of the conflicts between parties altogether.

105. During the last two or three years did you do any work for any of the parties or candidates?

106. During the last two or three years did you wear a campaign button or put a campaign sticker on your car?

107. During the last four years did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for one of the parties or candidates?

108. During the last two or three years did you, or any member of your household, give money or buy tickets to help pay the campaign expenses of a political party or candidate?

109. In the elections for president since you have been old enough to vote would you say you have voted in all of them _____, most of them_____, some of them_____, or none of them_____?

110. What about state and local elections? Would you say you have voted in all of them______, most of them______, some of them______, none of them ____?

111. When you have taken part in political campaigns how did you happen to get involved? Was there some issue, or did friends get you interested, or what?

Section VIII. Benefits and Impact of Activity

Now we would like to ask you what being active in school affairs or in the community has meant to you - what its impact has been on you.

112. In general terms what would you say your participation in school related activities has meant to you?

113. Has your participation altered the way you think about anything?__________

What is that?____

114. What about your social life? Do you interact with different people now as compared to before you got involved in school matters?
IF YES: Would you say a little more about that?

115. What about time? Has your participation in school affairs cut into the time you would have spent on other things____________?
IF YES: What things in particular?

116. About how much time in, say, a month do you spend on school affairs? ________
Does this change much from one month to another? ________
IF YES: In what way? ________________

117. What about other kinds of activities, in the community or in party politics or in nonpolitical organizations? How would you compare the impact on your thinking, your social life and so on of these other activities with school-related work? Would you say that school activity had a greater impact on you than other things, less or what?

Can you tell me why you say that?

Let us push a little further with what you might get out of participation. This is really the heart of what we are after.

118. Some people feel that they know more about what is going on in the school and the community as a result of taking part in school affairs. Has that been the case for you?

119. Some people think there is some economic reward, at least indirectly, from participation; you know, get your name known and it's good for business, that sort of thing. Do you feel you (OR IF HOUSEWIFE: your husband, have benefitted in this way?

120. Sometimes people get a kind of social benefit from participating, getting to know new people and that sort of thing. Do you feel this has been true for you?

121. It is often said that people can really find themselves and develop their potential by taking part in activities in the community. Do you feel that you have grown as a person as a result of your school participation?

122. Which of these possible benefits - information, economic, social, or personal development - has been the most significant for you?

Why is that?

123. Again, has there been any difference in the benefits you have gotten from school-related participation as compared to taking part in organizations in the community or party politics?

124. What about price - or what you might think of as price? Do you feel you have had to pay a price, or make a sacrifice in order to take part in school affairs?

IF YES: Would you say more about that?

125. What about other groups and organizations? Have you gotten involved in other organizations in the community or in other activities as a result of your school-related work?

Would you tell us about each of these you can think of? How did it come about?

Section IX. - Issues and Style Attitudes

We would like to find out how you feel about some of the political and social issues of today. These are all items that have been asked in other recent national surveys, so we will have a good basis for comparing the people in our study.

126. Which of these two statements do you agree with most?____________
    A) By nature women are happiest when they are making a home and caring for children.
    B) Our society, not nature, teaches women to prefer homemaking to work outside the home.

127. Are you in favor of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?________

128. Would you favor or oppose a law which would require a person to obtain a police permit before he or she could buy a gun?________________

129. In general, do you think the courts in this area deal too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals?______________________

130. There are always some people whose ideas are considered bad or dangerous by other people. For instance, somebody who is against all churches and religion......

    If such a person wanted to make a speech in your community against churches and religion, should he be allowed to speak or not?

    not [illegible]

131. Should such a person be allowed to teach in a college or university or not?______________________

132. If some people in your community suggested that a book he wrote against churches and religion should be taken out of your public library, would you favor removing this book, or not?____________________

133. Are there other people with particular ideas that you think are so dangerous that they ought not be allowed to make public speeches?

134. What about teaching in the schools of your community? Are there certain groups of people, people with certain social beliefs, you think ought not to be allowed to teach? ______________________

135. There is much talk about whose responsibility it is to solve the problems of today's society. I want to ask you about several major problems of today and who you think should have the main responsibility for solving them; should it be the individual and his family, the local government, the state government, the national government, or privately organized groups? [SHOW CARD #2]

A. What about the financing of medical care? ____________________

B. What about employment problems? ____________________________

C. What about adequate housing? _______________________________

D. What about looking after the aged? __________________________

136. Do you think the difference between the income of the rich and the poor in this country is much too great, somewhat too great, or is it as it should be? __________________________________

137. Some people say that government should have the major responsibility for the needs of the poor people in this country. Others say that the poor themselves should have major responsibility to do something about their problems. What do you believe?

____

****

138. May I ask you one other personal question? Would you please look at this card (NUMBER 3) and tell me which figure comes closest to your family income - from all sources during the past year - before taxes that is? Just tell me the LETTER next to the figure that fits best. _______________

SHOW CARD #3

****

Thank you very much for your patience and your help. Again, let me assure you that your answers will be completely confidential and no one outside the project staff will ever see them or have any way of discovering what you have said.

To be asked following #47

ID ____________________

TO BE ASKED ONLY OF PTA OFFICERS

139. You were an officer of the PTA. How did you get to be an officer?

(If answer is in terms of a general or abstract motive)

Did someone ask you?

140. Why did you agree?

141. How many different positions or offices did you hold? ____________________

142. Did you feel you accomplished something as an officer? ____________________

(If YES) What was that?

(If NO) Why do you think that was?

143. We are interested in the impact it had on you, being an officer in the PTA. Do you see things differently as a result? I mean, the schools.

Do you think differently about the schools here in ____________________
than you did before? ____________________
What things in particular? ____________________

144. What about the community more generally? Do you see that in a different light than you did before you served as an officer? ____________________
What things in particular?

I D ____________

TO BE ASKED ONLY OF CITIZENS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

145. You were a member of a Citizens Committee dealing with school matters. Just what things did that committee concern itself with?

146. About how much time did you spend working or going to meetings of that Committee?

147. Did you have any specific assignment on the Committee? ______________

148. IF YES: What was your particular responsibility on the Committee?

149. How did you get to be a member of the Committee?

150. Why do you think you were asked to serve?

151. Do you feel that you accomplished something - personally, I mean - by serving on the Committee?

IF YES: What was that?

152. We are interested in the impact it had on you to be a member of that kind of group. Do you see things differently as a result? I mean the schools; do you think differently about the schools here in ________________________________ than you did before?

IF YES: What things in particular?

153. What about the community more generally. Do you see that in a different light than you did before you were on the Committee?

IF YES: What things in particular?

I D ________

TO BE ASKED ONLY OF SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

154. You ran for the school board here in ______________________. how did you come to be a candidate? Was it your own idea, did some person or some group come to you, or what?

155. As far as you are able to remember, what motivated you? What reasons did you have for wanting to be on the school board?

156. Had you ever run for public office before? ______________
IF YES: What office(s) was (were) that?

157. When you ran for the School Board what campaign activities did you undertake?

158. Was there a group of people that provided you with especially active support? __________

158A IF YES: Who were they? Were they people you had known well before you ran, or were a lot of them people you met during your campaign?

158B IF YES: Why do you think they chose to help you?

159. We are interested in the impact that campaigning for office may have had on you. What effect did it have on your life, just the campaigning part, I mean? Would you say it had a very significant effect______, some effect______, not much effect______, no effect at all______.

What in particular makes you say that?

160. Do you see things differently regarding the schools here in ______________ as a result of your campaigning activities? ______________

IF YES: What things in particular?

161. What about the community more generally? Do you see that in a different light than you did before you began your campaign for the school board?

IF YES: :What things in particular?

162. Do you feel that your campaign - (IF THE RESPONDENT WON) - I mean the campaign only, not your service on the board) accomplished something?

IF YES: What was that?

162a. Probe YES

1 - Got me elected
2 - Kept radical or undesirable opponent off board
3 - Articulated issues
4 - Moral righteousness, crusaded for issue
9 - NA 1 col ~~372~~ 378